show me how

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by whiskeydoll

Summary

CHAPTERS 1-9 ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING REWRITTEN AND REUPLOADED! APOLOGIES FOR ANY CONFUSION.

Will is introduced to Dr. Chilton's new state of the art rehabilitation center for violent Alphas and “troubled” Omegas.

One

Chapter Notes

> Here's the NEW chapter one! Note: I'm in the process of rewriting the entire fic, so sorry for any inconsistencies from here on out.
>
> No beta.

Will feels *restless*, feverish. It's the only way to describe the incessant itching of skin and molten lava coursing through his veins. Heat burns throughout his upper body and trickles its way down into his limbs. It's something far more intense than his usual fits of nighttime anxiety, and his entire body aches with it.

He tosses in his bedsheets. Eventually, fed up with how they stick to his skin like a disgusting second layer, he kicks them off and sighs in short-lived relief.

The dogs know better than to share his bed. Winston is the only one stubborn enough to try. He shuffles around for a bit, prodding and pawing, and props his furry snout on his cramped abdomen, curling himself around Will to help soothe the distressed Omega. Will isn't sure how Winston puts up with all his nocturnal thrashing, but he appreciates it. The pups are the only real Omegan comfort he allows himself. His makeshift pack is more than enough to sate his nurturing instincts, the overwhelming, and often painful yearning for a family of his own. A biological need seared into his DNA since birth.

Despite the discomfort, Will smiles and brings a hand down to ruffle Winston's fur, scratching behind his floppy ears and chin until the rapid beating of his heart slows to a tolerable pace. It's moments like these, he thinks, that make it worth paying damn near half a week's paycheck on a steady supply of dog food.

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Will's able to squeeze in about an hour to two's worth of relatively blissful and undisturbed sleep. The chiming of his ringtone slices through the peaceful quiet of his bedroom in a cheery, grating loop—it's one of those default tones, number thirteen maybe, he's never changed the damn thing since the academy first issued it to him. Will groans and flops over on his side, toward the glow of the display, and reaches for his cellphone. It goes silent in his hands, buzzing once to notify him of the missed call. He scrubs the sleep from his eyes and sluggishly taps in his passcode. 9013. It's the year he adopted his first stray and his favorite number smashed together. Not very security-tight, honestly, if someone did some digging on him, but he couldn't be assed to put together anything longer than four quick motor-memory jabs in succession with how often Jack calls him.

4:46 AM. 2 missed calls. Jack Crawford. Not that he expects anyone else to call. The times when Alana called were like a breath of fresh air, even if it was under the guise of pinpointing where he landed on the day's stability chart through boring, empty small talk. He doesn't blame her.

Will yawns and freezes before his finger reaches the callback button. Now that he's awake—really, *really* awake—he's aware of the dampness coating his body. A cloying, nauseous pool of sweat originating from his armpits and soaking him to his damned toes. The sheets, pillows, his clothes, they're completely fucking drenched. Even his curls have lost their bounce, sticking flat to his forehead, while his thin white undershirt clings uncomfortably tight against his scorching skin. But the worst of it is his underwear, gross and sticky in every crease and fold. He licks his dry lips and shivers. He can't be on the verge of heat, because that's impossible.

Just to make sure, he pushes himself up into a sitting position and cautiously rubs both thighs together. He's ashamed of how easily they slide together, how indecent it is when he spreads them and watches the wetness cling to him in slick, pearly strings. His father's voice, gruff and accented, brute forces its way into his head, *"Omegas are nothing more than wet, little whores. Are you a whore, Will? Look at me when I'm talking to you, boy."* Will's hands tremble at the memory. It's always the same. The same goddamn hate and mockery lacing his words; an imprint of his childhood stamped into his subconscious. His breath hitches with a whimper, and Will flings his phone in a flare of self-disgust, gazing at the wall with repressed contempt for the old bastard.

He counts to ten, brushes the curls from his brow, and exhales shakily. Afterward, he rises from the bed, careful not to disturb the dogs. Winston shifts at the movement, regards him with a curious tilt of his head, but sensing no immediate threat, stays put.

Good boy.

In the small bathroom, Will stands in front of the sink for what feels like hours, but is probably only minutes, staring down into the rust-colored tunnel of the drain until his vision blurs and he's convinced it might swallow him. Wishes it would. He grips the cool porcelain between both hands, hard enough to leave a mark. With the flames still ravaging his insides, the soles of his feet against the chilled tile are a heavenly relief. Will twists the knob on the faucet and runs his palm under the frigid water. If he closes his eyes, it almost sounds like a stream. Somewhere, far away, the phone rings.

Ding. Ding. Brrring.

Will wonders if Jack is trying to get a damn high-score on how many times he can send a message in under a minute.

Jack can wait. Will's busy. Busy dissociating and thinking about streams in his bathroom with his underwear stuck to his ass in what he hopes is sweat and not slick at—what? Some ungodly hour of the morning. He's not dumb, though. He knows what it is. Sweat doesn't cling the same way. It doesn't stick together and flake when it dries, and it certainly doesn't smell *sweet* like a sugary indulgent combination of chocolate and vanilla. That said, denial has always been one of his strongest traits. It's probably on his resume, under the word

unstable. And there's nothing like starting the day all twisted up in a hot, steamy state of denial. *Better than coffee*, he thinks to himself bitterly.

He goes down the mental checklist in search of an excuse. Fever, chills, body aches. No arousal, strangely enough, so there's still hope. He'll go with the flu. Sounds a hell of a lot better than pre-heat sickness. Which, he'd like to stress, is an impossibility.

Will ignores the frantic dinging from the other room and swings open the old paint-chipped medicine cabinet tucked away in his mirror. It resembles a mini-pharmacy. Painkillers, antacids—nerves are hell on the stomach, and he's surprised they haven't burned a hole through it yet—first aid essentials, and three offensively bright bottles with a yellow warning label.

Hormone Suppressants (Maximum Strength). Take one tablet once every week.

Warning: for Omegas only.

He takes one look at the writing on the label and grits his teeth.

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In and out at the count of ten.

Will spends another minute practicing deep breathing exercises—he thinks Alana would be proud, except it makes zero fucking difference—and debates whether to call Jack. He's not in the mood for his self-masturbatory Alpha posturing. He's not in the mood for anything that comes packaged with the name Jack Crawford. He decides, instead, to take a much-needed shower. He can't exactly turn up to crime scenes reeking of sweat and God knows what. The cool stream of the shower helps ground him and does wonders to calm his rapid breathing, caressing his tense muscles like a soothing balm. It brings such a profound relief to his fevered body, that he's reluctant to leave. By the end, he almost feels normal. His definition of normal, anyway.

If only he could get rid of the throbbing in his sinus.

Toweling down his curls, he fetches his phone from the edge of the bed and massages the bridge of his nose. It was juvenile of him, throwing around his belongings and avoiding responsibility over a few drops of slick that sneaked past his boxers. Big deal. It's a normal bodily function. It happens. He squashes down the guilt and hits the call button next to Crawford's name, and braces himself.

It connects on the second ring.

"Will," Crawford booms, voice harsh and tinny through the speaker. Will cringes and pulls the phone away from his ear. There's a pause, muffled voices. Price and Zeller bickering in the background over inconsequential details. "It's about damn time you answered your phone."

“Yeah. Sorry,” Will sighs, phone pressed against his shoulder. He fumbles with the can of aerosol spray and hoses himself down in three fluid motions, paying extra attention to his scent gland.

“I need you in Baltimore again,” Jack says, not one to waste time. “Our Sweetheart killer fancies himself a matchmaker.”

Will snorts. “Blind dates never work out.” He brings his wrists up for a sniff, then his armpits. Beta cologne has an almost astringent odor to it. He doesn’t get how anyone could enjoy wearing it, but that’s not the point.

“And I’m sure you’d know a lot about that.” Another pause. “I texted you the address.”

“I’ll have to dig for it.” *In the fifty fucking texts you just sent me.* How much space did his phone have, anyway? Jack might have hit the limit this time. A new personal record.

“You do that,” Jack replies, cutting through his thoughts. “Don’t keep me waiting, Will. You know I hate it. The longer we wait, the higher the body count.”

Will can feel Jack’s poor mood practically radiating through the end of his shitty work-issued blackberry. “I won’t. I’m sorry. Give me an hour.”

“Good.”

The back of Will’s nape tingles, and the line goes dead.

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Thanks to the traffic and a flipped eighteen-wheeler, he takes two hours to get to Baltimore. Will’s not sure he’s entirely conscious for the half of it, he isn’t sure he’s conscious *now*. It’s just one big blur of shifting images, shapes melding into one giant kaleidoscopic mess of color, sight, scent, and sound. Somewhere between here and there, he’d lost track of the time. He remembers sitting at an intersection, the red haze of the stoplight lighting up the interior of his car. Melting. No, dripping onto the pavement. An expanding pool of dark, sticky blood.

He wants to dip his fingers in it.

Maybe. Just maybe, his decision to leave the cozy little walls of his home in Wolf Trap was premature.

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It takes a second for his eyes to adjust. The room is drab, no signs of a struggle, only a sliver of daylight creeping in through the curtains. That isn’t a problem, Will finds he operates best in low light environments, helps the imagination run wild. The problem is the smell. A noxious combination of sickly sweet pheromones layered with the stench of death. Will feels like he’s choking. To make matters worse, since the moment Jack ushered him in the door with barely a greeting, the pain in his sinus has jumped from a three to ten on the pain scale.

Will gags and stumbles backward.

Still, he forces his gaze and examines the scene before him. Two bodies suspended from the ceiling fan with fish wire and rope, strung up and posed like marionettes in someone's perverse idea of an embrace. It's a shoddy job, in his opinion. Mere child's play compared to its predecessor. A copycat dipping his feet into the kiddie pool.

There's no real rhyme or pattern to it, aside from the fact their matchmaking killer likes to strike in pairs.

Alpha and Omega. Sweethearts. Valentines. *Did you enjoy my gift?*

Will places a trembling hand atop the dresser behind him and pushes himself upright. He doesn't want to be here. He can't be here right now. It's too soon. His mind is on fire. He needs to leave, needs an *Alpha* to—Will bites his tongue and whines. Jack knew. He knew it was too soon. He should have warned him.

"Will. Everything okay in there?" Someone takes him by the shoulder and shakes. The world tips, and Will falls over like a stack of dominoes with it. "What did you see? Get it together."

"A-alpha…?" Will gasps, jerking at the sensation. The Alpha's large, imposing hands send a sharp ripple through his body, but he's not the one Will wants, *needs*. His scent is all wrong.

Will throws him off, flying backward into the dresser. A picture of a family he doesn't recognize, their faces blurred and warped, tips over with a crash. He howls in distress and crouches down into a defensive position, emitting a low, warning growl.

"Will. It's Jack," the Alpha says slowly. He approaches with his hands up, the way one would a frightened animal. His face looks apologetic, almost.

Will can't make out the words. The only reply he's capable of is a throaty, strangled noise, something caught between a whimper and a growl. He flashes his teeth and brings up his claws. They're deliberately filed, blunt and ineffectual for what he's trying to achieve, and it's hardly threatening. It's *instinctual*.

With a flood of light, the door flies open, hinges squealing, and the Alpha in front of him yells. Dazed, Will squints and watches the blue suits scramble in, single-mindedly sniffing out the source of the distress call. Their eyes land on him, glowing blood-red irises burrowing into his skin, and the sight is eerily similar to the stoplight on his way into Baltimore.

They scent the air and circle around him, crowding him against the wall like a pack of hungry wolves. They may not smell him, but it's not hard to put two and two together. Will's the only one capable of making the sound, he thinks he might be making one now. The Omega in him trills from the attention, but outwardly he bares his fangs and snaps at them, daring them. *It's a predator-prey world*, Will thinks deliriously.

Let's be sweethearts.

Hands press against him, hot and impatient. Over his neck, his chest, between the wetness in his legs. One of them growls into his nape, ragged breath tainting what doesn't belong to them.

Hot spasms shoot through Will's sinus, and something in him snaps, animal instinct taking over.

Ripping and tearing in self-preservation.

The bitter taste of iron floods his mouth.

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Warm, fuzzy darkness envelops him.

Will's consciousness comes in increments. Another nightmare. This one more vivid than the last, though they've always had a wild, fever-like quality to them—hard to separate from reality. It takes some time for his brain to catch up with his body, content with drifting in a calm, fleeting blanket of wakefulness. Will grinds his teeth together and groans. His jaw aches. When he reaches up to rub the tension from it, something cold latches around his wrist with a snap, dragging it back against his side with a loud, metallic rattle. Confused, he tries again. Nothing.

"Winston…" Will mumbles in his half-asleep state.

"Rise and shine, Graham."

That voice. Will knows that voice.

Will sucks in a lungful of air and yanks his wrists again, pulling the cuffs taut. He blinks his eyes against the harsh lights and squints, anxiously waiting for them to adjust.

And when they do, his stomach sinks with dread.

Two

Chapter Notes

Chapter two rewritten.
Again, sorry for any mistakes!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The voice belongs to Dr. Frederick Chilton.

Will pushes down the resulting wave of panic and schools his face with indifference. The last thing he'll do is give this asshole the satisfaction of watching him crack. It's what he does for a living, gets his rocks off watching nonconformist Omegas succumb to their "submissive natures" through illegal experimentation. Will's always thought for a beta to have such shitty Alpha-centric views, Frederick must harbor an inferiority complex the size of the gulf, and Will wants no part stepping foot in those murky waters.

He's met him once, through Jack's insistence. A pretty dull case involving an Omega, typical black widow stuff—*yeah, big surprise*. Will could have solved it in his sleep, but Jack had practically shoved him through the door despite his unwillingness. For a legitimate reason, he was afraid if he stepped foot through the threshold, he might not leave.

Frederick is the hack author of a series of publications regarding the subject of Omegan psychology and has made quite the name of himself in his circle of sycophants. Deviant and criminal behavior are his forte. In Frederick's mind, it all boils down to one simple explanation: an unbonded Omega is an unhappy Omega. His belief is that it's physically and psychologically traumatic for an Omega past a certain heat cycle, typically noted as their second, to go around unclaimed without a dominant. It goes against God and nature, etcetera, that kinda bullshit. Just thinking about it makes Will's brain cells recoil. The man has a list of made-up illnesses in his glossary pulled straight from his ass.

It's just a load of bigoted, egotistical nonsense. Though, his works make good kindling for the fireplace. 5-stars, in that respect.

None of this spells anything good.

The equipment Will's hooked to, with all its colorful wires and electrodes, beeps shrilly in his ears, and his sinus pulsates alongside it. Chilton's given him a sedative, is his first thought. It would explain the fuzzy itch along skin and nausea churning in his gut. He can gather a few guesses as to where he is, but *why* is the question he's most afraid of.

"Frederick." It's less of a greeting, more of an unpleasant observation. Will growls and squirms in his bindings, sticky with residual sweat. He tenses his muscles against the restraints, testing their give. Omega proof. "So, I guess it was more than just the flu."

“Will, it’s good to see you again.” Chilton smiles, petting Will’s cheek as if fondly handling a pet. “The flu?” He laughs. “Yes. What a surprise.”

“Oh. I’ll bet.”

Chilton reeks of something bitter and chemical; a *familiar* musk. Will flinches in disgust and tries not to gag. He’d love nothing more than to punch the bastard, but the restraints prevent him from doing anything but wriggle his fingers.

“An Omega masquerading as a beta.” Chilton clicks his tongue, smirking. “And just how long did you expect that to work?”

“Are those Alpha pheromones?” It dawns on him, the smell. Artificial pheromones. Will bares his fangs and huffs out an incredulous laugh. “Face it, Frederick, you’ll never be the predator you work so hard to parade yourself as—*fuck you*.”

Will chokes.

Chilton’s hand grips his throat faster than he can blink and squeezes the pressure point below his pulse. It’s a form of gentling. The more socially acceptable term for when one wrestles an unruly Omega into submission for the sake of their wellbeing. Another biological advantage that Alphas have over Omegas. Something betas don’t possess. Not naturally, at least, but science has come a long way with lab-grown pheromones.

It takes Will by complete surprise, his brain lagging, struggling to catch up. He arches his back and parts his lips, chasing the sudden rush of dopamine with a weak whine. He’s disgusted at himself, at his body for yielding at the slightest hint of an Alpha, and at Chilton for manipulating his biology.

Chilton grins down at him smugly and releases him. “Does that answer your question?”

Will sucks in a shallow breath, and after a tense pause, says, “I want to speak to Jack Crawford.”

“I’m afraid that’s impossible, Will. You've caused quite the ruckus, and Jack’s under a lot of heat for it.” Chilton raises a thoughtful brow. “Did Jack know about you? Did you two perhaps… have an arrangement?”

“What? *No*,” Will blurts, making a face. Chilton is suggesting that he and Jack… had a thing? The mere idea is ridiculous. “No. He doesn’t know, *didn’t* know.” He sure as hell knows now.

Chilton hums. He doesn’t look entirely convinced. “Well, you’ve always been a smart cookie, Will. I’m sure you’ve realized why you’re here.”

Will clenches his jaw and averts his gaze. “I can guess.”

“Then, allow me to reassure you. You’re in good hands, Will. There’s been quite the success rate in the few months we’ve been up and operating. You’ll be happy to know, ninety percent of our Alpha and Omega pairs have been completely reformed. I’m sure even someone like

you is capable, given enough time and care," Chilton says, leaning over him with a loaded syringe. The needle comes uncomfortably close to Will's neck.

Will snaps his teeth at him.

Chilton recoils and regards Will anxiously, brushing his suit down and retreating to a table off to the side. Confused, Will blinks but quietly rejoices. It doesn't last long, though. Not when the gravity of the situation sets in.

Will cranes his head, but in his position, it's hard to see what Chilton is up to. He suspects he'd rather not know.

"So, what? Being an Omega is a crime now?" Will snarls, twisting in his restraints. "You can't do this. I won't take part in your experiments, Chilton. If you won't let me speak to Jack, then I have the right to demand a lawyer."

"The right? If you were mated, perhaps," Chilton chimes in. "You gave up your rights the moment you lied your way into a government position. They found pretty damning evidence at your house, Will. You've been illegally purchasing and abusing black market suppressants. You—" He sighs and shakes his head, reappearing at his bedside. In his left hand is an anti-bite mask, and Will feels like a feral dog about to be muzzled.

"What's the last thing you remember, Will?" Chilton asks, curious.

"I don't—" Will eyes the masks warily. That's a good question. "I don't know, and even if I did, I wouldn't tell *you*."

Will squeezes his eyes shut and digs through the banks of his memory, hoping to salvage something from it.

He remembers sitting in his bedroom, ear pressed against the phone, Jack's voice unintelligible. One of his dogs barks.

He remembers searing hot pain on his inner wrist where they brand him. The way Chilton grips him by the jaw and takes a razor to his face in swift, unsteady drags. How the blade nicks his chin.

"It's standard regulation. You understand, don't you, Will?" says Chilton, stripping the clothes from him. Will tries to push him off, but he's too drugged, too weak. The orderlies ignore his protests and hold him down at the shoulders. One of them forces a pink jumpsuit past his bare thighs. They laugh at how slick he is.

The rest is static.

Will's eyes fly open in panic.

Whatever he's done to wind up here, his life is over. It doesn't make a damned difference whether he remembers. Chilton will publish his name to the public and when Freddy Lounds gets word of it, if she hasn't already, he'll take Hannibal Lecter's spot on the next issue of Tattle Crime. Nobody will come for him.

Will hyperventilates.

“I d-don’t—what’ll happen to my dogs?” he stammers, darting his eyes to the nearest reflective surface. His panicked, bare-faced reflection stares back at him. Without the barrier of his facial hair, he looks ten years younger. Softer, *Omegan*. The baby pink jumpsuit highlights the rosy, hormonal hue of his cheeks. He knows if he could move his wrists, he'd find the scarred Ω-symbol there. Will shudders and looks away.

“Memory loss is one of the most common side effects of hormone suppressants. But we’ll have plenty of time to work on that,” Chilton says, plunging the needle into his neck. “Now just relax your pretty little head. You won’t have to worry about anything anymore.”

Will hisses. “Stop, please.”

“Shh,” Chilton hushes him, running his slimy fingers through his hair. “Welcome to Baltimore’s new Omega-Point Behavioral Facility. OBF for short.”

“How original. Did you come up with that yourself?” Will slurs out through the drowsiness. Chilton ignores him and fastens the anti-bite mask over his face, tight enough to threaten his circulation.

Will’s consciousness flickers and dances.

Chilton presses a button on his intercom device, and two men in white uniforms file in after one another. One of them stares at Will for an uncomfortably long second. “Sir?”

Will’s limbs go numb.

“I think you’ll like your new roommate, Will,” Chilton smiles gleefully and waves a flippant hand at the men. “Stick him with Lecter. I think they’ll get along just swell, don’t you?”

“You’ve gotta be shitting me…” Will laughs hysterically. Even sedated, he’s not naïve enough to think Chilton wouldn’t salivate at the opportunity to torture him in the most exaggerated way possible.

There’s only one person in this facility with that name.

Chapter End Notes

Hannibal appears in the next chapter.

Three

Chapter Notes

Chapter 3, rewritten.
4 and 5 should be back up in another week!

The layout of the facility is more of a high-security psychiatric hospital than any rehabilitation center Will's ever seen. It makes sense, though, since that was its originally intended purpose before Chilton moved in and rebranded the place. Will thinks he should consider a new wallpaper.

It smells like piss and Alpha. There's not a single trace of Omega anywhere. Likely because they've been scent-marked and claimed into oblivion. Will hangs his head and blinks slowly, but his eyes refuse to focus for longer than a second.

Chilton's men drag his limp body through the bleak cellblock, betting and shaking on how long he'll last before moving onto the latest sports scores, and Will likens it to the long trek to hell. At some point, the Alphas start shouting obscenities through their cells—shit like, *"Got a hard knot right here for you, princess"*, and, oh, his favorite, *"Come here and let me suck on that slick pussy, beautiful."* The entire floor is filled with growls, shrill whistles, and catcalls. It's not that he isn't skeeved out by it, just that Will finds he's way too doped up for it to inspire any noticeable response in him, indignant or otherwise. It's his nape that excites them. Bare and unmarred, put on display. It arouses them to see him being led around like a submissive doll—*the things they could do to him*.

They want to claim and breed him, add him to their trophy cabinet because of what he is: a male Omega, a rare and precious gem. Male Omegas make up less than one percent of the population. Since before he was born, society has fetishized and reduced his kind to simple breeding holes. It's not uncommon for them to end up in underground slave auctions and sex trafficking circles, bid off to the highest paying Alpha. Their heats are longer, more violent, and the scent travels farther compared to their female counterparts. Just another one of Will's curses.

Too bad for them. He's already been wrapped up in a pretty pink bow and gifted to the good Dr. Lecter.

The transition from the upper levels of the basement is like night and day. Largely well-maintained, free of the stench of Alpha piss and other secretions, and the floors are so neatly waxed, they're damned near blinding. There's the delightfully nauseating chlorine smell of bleach wafting in the air. Real homey.

Will doesn’t keep track of the security bypass locks and surveillance cameras. It’s impossible in his state, and he doubts he could count them on two hands.

They come to a stop. Will blinks and squints long enough to see the cage of plexiglass fixed at the center, and he swallows bile. Hannibal, his new roommate, sits calmly, sketching at his desk, looking for all the world as if he were simply basking in the comfort of his own damned home, rather than a wild animal enclosed in a glass zoo. He doesn’t look up. This irritates Will a lot more than he’d care to admit. He's spent an enormous chunk of his life chasing afterimages of this man at the beck and call of Jack Crawford. The least he could do was fucking acknowledge him.

It’s infuriating on a deeply visceral level, to think that he is just another Omega to him, another toy to sink his teeth in.

The orderly bangs his fist against the plexiglass. “Up against the wall, Lecter. You know the drill.”

Hannibal, who dons his navy jumpsuit like it’s a three-piece suit instead of run-of-the-mill prison garb, rises and clasps his hands behind his back in quiet compliance.

All Will can think is that *it really is him*, and his heart leaps into his throat.

The saying goes: the darker the blue, the purer the blood. Coincidentally, the purer the blood the more inclined to violence one is. He’s taught lectures on it. Pure-bred Alphas hold among the highest percentage of the world’s serial killer population. But Hannibal’s lineage isn’t exactly a secret, the man’s a pure dominant through and through. Lounds had the piece of information right. Compared to the light blue prowling the upper floors, Hannibal’s shade of blue is so dark, it's a mere step away from being black; a striking and humiliating contrast to his delicate pink.

Will finds all of this inappropriately hilarious and snorts out a laugh, descending into giggles. Hannibal sets his gaze on him and raises a brow, amused by his reaction.

This must be some kind of joke. Will wonders if Jack knows that instead of rotting away in a maximum-security prison, Lecter’s landed himself a cushy luxury cage, free meals included. Something tells Will that Jack really, *really* doesn’t know. With his personal vendetta, there’s no way he’d be okay with this.

Will stifles his laughter. He realizes his burst of hysterics isn’t doing him any favors and doesn’t want to give Chilton an excuse to check him off as another “unbonded Omega prone to neuroticism”.

The orderly swipes his key card and the door clicks open with a grating, head-splitting buzz. Will digs his heels into the ground and takes a poorly aimed swing at the uniformed men. He won’t go into the beast’s lair that easily. There’s a brief scuffle, and by brief, he means terribly brief. It doesn’t take much for them to send him to his knees. Hannibal watches it all from his part of the cell, lips curling into a smile. Entertainment here must be scarce.

“I wasn’t expecting any more visitors today,” Hannibal says, accent curling around his tongue. He tilts his head. “I’ve not seen many male Omegas around this part.”

It’s odd, Will thinks, putting a voice to the face. He’s not sure how to feel. Frankly, he feels like hurling.

“Fresh meat, Doctor,” says the orderly.

“No.” Will cringes, freeing an arm.

“Say something, sweetheart?”

Will huffs, attempting to stand. “I said—nngh… no.”

The orderly cuts him off with a tight grip on his curls and yanks his head back, exposing his throat. “Speak louder.”

Hannibal dips his eyes appreciatively over the blank canvas of skin, and the Omega in Will swoons. Heat grazes his cheeks, and he’s powerless against the sick flutter in stomach, his heart bashing against his ribcage. The act of baring one’s neck is a tradition reserved only for the last step in courtship. It’s an invitation. A universal gesture of sacred trust between an Alpha and Omega that takes years to establish. To them it means nothing, but to Will, it’s a deeply humiliating experience. Worse, when his body responds, trembling with anticipation, whine perched under his chin like a bashful Omega on the cusp of his first heat.

“Another so soon?” Hannibal looks away, bored. “I thought I made it clear to Dr. Chilton that I was growing tired of his games. The outcome is obvious, no matter their rarity. Though,” He considers for a tick. “He is rather pleasant to look at.”

Will rolls his eyes to the ceiling and mentally ticks off the cameras. He’s curious. Before Chilton and his fellow cohort rush to destroy evidence, exactly just how many angles will his unquestionably violent end be broadcasted in? It’s a far more strenuous task than he realizes when the room refuses to stop spinning. He thinks he prefers an instant death, no chance of being tortured, or forcefully bonded that way.

There are words being exchanged, but his consciousness mercifully spares him.

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“Guess all the excitement got to him.” The orderly laughs. “I’d hold off on doing anything crazy, Dr. Lecter. This pretty little bird here is a *special* case.”

Hannibal hums and peers down at Will’s slumped over figure, curious. “Explain.”

The orderly, Matthew, drops his hold on Will, and the three men stand idly, watching him plant face-first into the ground. Matthew leans down to re-adjust the fastenings on Will’s mask, double-checking to make sure there’s enough breathing room for him. They don’t want him suffocating before the fun’s started.

“This here’s just a small precaution. Temporary,” Matthew says, buckling the straps and locking them. “Seems a little redundant, considering who he’s rooming with, but this one’s a bit of a biter.” Matthew smooths a hand over the back of Will’s head and sniffs him, fingers curling into his hair. He lets out a chuckle. “Word is, the bitch went feral. Took a bite out of someone’s throat. Not just anyone, either, an Alpha. Poor bastard died on the scene. The rest of the story, I’m afraid you’ll have to find out for yourself. Just, you know, play with him a little, I’m sure he’ll squeal.”

“How interesting,” Hannibal replies, interest piqued. “It’s not the usual offense for his kind.”

“Nope. Told you he was special.” Matthew rolls Will onto his back and stands, prodding him with his foot. Will doesn’t budge. The only sign he’s still alive is the shallow rise and fall of his chest. Matthew snorts. “You two have a lot in common. Why don’t you help the bitch get settled in? I’ll be back with lunch for two at the usual time.” He grins and wags his finger at Hannibal. “Don’t go breaking your new toy too quickly now.”

Lecter clicks his tongue, attention fixed on Will. “What have I told you about that sort of language, Mr. Brown.”

“Hey, I just call them what they are, Doc.” Matthew shrugs and heads for the door, the other orderly quickly trailing behind him. He doesn’t seem too keen on being in the same room with Hannibal. Not like Matthew, who speaks as if they’re old friends.

“Goodbye for now. Give Frederick my regards,” says Hannibal, dismissing them. He waits until they’re out of earshot, moves from the wall, and kneels at Will’s side. “What have you gotten yourself into now, Will?”

Four

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

When Will regains consciousness, the first thing he sees is Hannibal staring down at him, which makes for a deeply unpleasant feeling in his gut, though it could also just be the drugs leaving his system. He's sprawled out at Hannibal's feet like an offering, jumpsuit soaked through in a cold sweat. Their brief, accidental eye contact and resulting onslaught on Will's mental forts sends an involuntary shiver through his body. Hannibal's eyes are the darkest shade of red, and Will wishes he could float right out of his clammy skin and squeeze his way out through the gaps in the plexiglass. It's like pitching headfirst into hell. He's afraid. Why wouldn't he be, waking up with a man whose freedom he'd stomped on one Sunday morning. Just the two of them sequestered away in a bored man's basement.

It's quiet, too quiet.

Hannibal's eyes have a pervasive-like glow to them. Nature's way of tagging him as a predator, and for Will, a big fat warning sign. The red coloration normally only affects Alphas experiencing rut, but pure-bred are the exception. For them, it's just a naturally occurring phenomenon. It's Will's first glimpse at the wild, since pure-bred Alphas are just as rare as he is, and, well, the textbook illustrations really don't do it justice.

Cautiously, Will brings a hand to his throat and rubs his scent gland, checking for any noticeable damage or scarring on the off-chance he's bleeding out at Hannibal's feet and unaware. He'd like to say he's surprised when his hand comes away clean, but knowing Hannibal, Will thinks he'd probably prefer to lie in wait, calculating the exact moment his prey realizes its mortality, then deliver his striking blow. More fun that way.

"Ugh." Will chokes on his own spit, coughing.

The mask is like a death vice around his face, and breathing is difficult. It's humid, stifling, and each puff of breath fogs up the inside of the plastic with a gross layer of condensation. There's a trickle of saliva at the corner of his mouth. Will darts his tongue out, licks his lips, and swallows.

After the shame dies down, Will grudgingly finds the strength to speak, "Look. I know you're not exactly known for employing the methods of humane slaughter, but I was hoping you'd make an exception this time."

"Hello to you, too." Hannibal gives him a long scrutinizing look and grins, kneeling beside him. "Are you familiar with my methods?"

Will huffs out an acidic laugh and picks at the scab on his wrist—*branded like cattle*. "Who isn't? You're the face of every media outlet. Headline, Alpha psychiatrist turned cannibalistic serial killer. I'm sure you just *love* the attention."

“Don’t pick,” Hannibal admonishes him, hauling Will up into a sitting position. “You’ll only prolong the healing process. Best to let it heal undisturbed.”

Will flinches at their newfound proximity and lowers his chin, shielding his throat. He doesn’t know what to expect from Hannibal, but concern sure isn’t on the list. “What does it matter? Let’s just cut to the chase. Are you going to kill me or not? Because if not, I’d like to get started on securing myself a way out of here.”

Hannibal smiles. “What makes you think I want to kill you?”

For one, Will thinks, death would be the preferable alternative, compared to whatever Chilton has planned for him. He’s read snippets about what goes on behind closed doors. Forced bonding, breeding marathons, experimental heat-inducing drugs, brainwashing through hypnotherapy, and that’s just the gist of it. Chilton’s been known to *sample* his subjects. Either way, he’s damned and shudders to think of what’ll happen if Hannibal decides he’d rather play with his food.

“Allow me,” says Hannibal.

There’s little warning besides that, when Hannibal slides his fingers along the back of his head, through his curls, and tips his head forward. Will tenses and swallows nervously. He can't fathom being handled with such tenderness by brutalizing hands, but this close, he can *smell* him. A heady waft of Alpha pheromones tinged with a copper undertone that lingers sinfully at the roof of his mouth like blood. The Omegan part of his brain lights up with giddiness.

Seeking the source, Will unconsciously leans into Hannibal’s chest and sucks in another mouthful until he’s drunk on it. The blood rushes straight to his cock, twitching in interest, and slick gathers in his underwear. The animal part of Will’s brain encourages him, whispers treacherously in his ear of Hannibal’s virility and superior genes—of their *compatibility*. It’s a dangerous train of thought. Imprinting on Hannibal is the last thing he needs, but his scent has already been stored away and compartmentalized in his brain.

Hannibal unhooks his mask and lets it slide from Will’s face onto his lap, jolting him back to reality. He sucks in a deep, gratifying gasp of air, granting him another lungful of Hannibal’s scent, and scrubs the moisture from his mouth with the back of his hand. Will’s unused to this kind of reaction, the suppressants should have dulled his instincts, but it’s possible that sedatives aren’t the only thing Chilton’s fed him with.

He realizes, a little too late, that Hannibal’s gentleness is nothing but a ruse, a way to trick him into lowering his guard and lull him into a false sense of security, when the next moment, Hannibal’s hand constricts around his neck and forces him backward. Will’s head smacks against the linoleum with a sick thud, temporarily stunning him. It hurts like hell. Fear rises in his throat, along with bile, and hard-wired survival kicks in. Will snarls and thrashes, clawing at Hannibal’s face, his arms, anything he can get. He’d expected it would come to this, but Will never said he’d go down without a fight.

A rough jab of fingers into the pressure point in his neck instantly deflates him.

“O-oh, *fuck*,” Will chokes out a miserable whine as the fight fizzles out him.

Chilton’s cheap imitation of gentling is nothing like being maneuvered into submission by a real Alpha. With a rush of endorphins, Will’s eyes roll back in pleasure, heat bolting down the curve of his back. Will arches his spine and stills. He can’t move. Hannibal blocks his airway effortlessly, nosing along his jawline and the tender junction of his neck, over his scent gland, and Will gasps in dull horror. He’s scenting him, Will realizes, alarms going off in his head. It’s possible Hannibal doesn’t want to kill him, he wants to *mark* him.

“Don’t. Please. Anything but that,” Will breathes, ragged. “Kill me. Eat me. Just not that.”

An orderly doing his routine round bangs against the plexiglass with his nightstick. “Simmer down in there.”

It’s hard to hear over the blood swimming in his head. His vision wobbles and his lungs burn with the effort. As a last resort, Will disperses a wave of distress hormones.

Hannibal releases him, and raises his hands in a calming gesture, unfazed by the angry welts on his jaw. “That was rude of me, I apologize. I just couldn’t help but notice your scent is faint, almost undetectable. There’s a slight chemical tinge to it. The unfortunate side-effects of suppressant overdose, I’m assuming.”

Will takes a gasping lungful of air.

“Th-that’s… *what*?” Will sputters, coughing in agony as he scrambles away into a corner, putting distance between them. He places his hands on his throat and rasps, “That’s none of your business. Wait—you can’t smell me, so you, what, just decided to strangle me? That… doesn’t surprise me.”

“Don’t be so coarse. I wasn’t trying to strangle you. I was merely stimulating the natural production of pheromones through an induced state of stress,” Hannibal replies, as if it’s the most obvious thing, and Will has insulted him by assuming otherwise. He stands and moves to his desk, observing his drawing. “It is my business. If we’re put here to follow the natural order. Then, let there be no secrets between us. To guide and cherish, in sickness and in health, is the old saying, isn’t it? It’s a good thing you’ve stopped taking those dreadful things. Have you experienced any headaches? Loss of time? Loss of memory, maybe?”

Will must have heard wrong because he’s sure those are bonding rights.

“What the hell are you talking about?” Will scoffs, scrunching up his face in disbelief. “We aren’t bonded. That doesn’t apply to us. I don’t have to tell you a goddamn thing.” *Yet*. There’s a threat there somewhere, and Will doesn’t like where this is headed.

With his back flush against the plexiglass, Will scans the room. He’ll need a sufficient escape route if Hannibal fancies another go at his neck. The room is spacious compared to the cells upstairs, but it’s too open. He’s basically a sitting duck. There’s a desk at the center where Hannibal stands, walls lined top to bottom with bookshelves, and a fireplace that serves no practical function aside from aesthetics. Cut off by a divider are the toilet and shower, and propped near the far wall is a singular bed. The thought of sharing a bed with Hannibal, while

Chilton jacks himself off on the other side of the cameras, makes him want to retch. He could just make a makeshift noose with the bedsheets. It wouldn't be the worst way to go.

But if he has to hear Hannibal utter another word, presuming to know his body better than him, he's going to scream. Like the ban on high-grade suppressants isn't just another way for Alphas to encourage co-dependency. It's infuriating.

"Why is everyone suddenly an expert in Omegan health?" Will mutters, throwing his hands up in exasperation.

Hannibal replies without skipping a beat. "It was a prerequisite. I studied it a great deal during my residency at Johns Hopkins."

Will glowers, staring down at his stupid pink slip-ons. "Oh, right. Of course you did." Trapped in a cage with a monster just overflowing with knowledge of every flaw and weakness in his body and reduced to the sum of his body parts by a sham Omegan specialist. This is just swell.

Hannibal draws his attention back to Will, huddled against the plexiglass. "You have difficulty with eye contact. That's a common case with the younger generation of Omega. Society tells them never to look an Alpha in the eyes unless they want to draw unwanted attention to themselves. But it's rather backward thinking, isn't it? Do you resent what you are? The world can be an unforgiving place to those who refuse to adhere to the written rules."

"Will you shut up? It has nothing to do with that," Will hisses, crossing his arms defensively. It's obvious what Hannibal's doing. Male Omegas are expected from birth to fit a certain feminine ideal, something he's since rejected. And he's also aware of Hannibal's propensity for springing conversational traps and getting into people's heads—he's read the files. The sooner he ends this conversation, the better. "I've had one spectacularly shitty day. I'm not in the mood for your mind games, *Dr. Lecter*."

Hannibal smiles. "I'm afraid I haven't gotten your name yet."

"Go to hell. I'm done talking to you, you crazy son of a bitch."

The only way he might try to wiggle himself out of this one, even temporarily, is if he can somehow appeal to Chilton's vanity and convince him to let him leave the room. Will lifts his head to the ceiling and attempts to bargain with him. "Chilton. You were right. I need your help. Can we talk now?"

Across the room, Hannibal paces in a back-and-forth motion like a pendulum.

It's the calm before the storm. Will's muscles tense, his fight-or-flight instincts revving up. No matter how hard he tries to repress his nature, his brain will always recognize the warning signs because it's biologically wired to. Hannibal is gearing up for the chase, a tradition older than time, and there's only one end-goal. Will braces himself against the wall, sweat prickling at his temples. If Hannibal's intentions weren't clear before, they sure as hell are now.

Hannibal pins him down with a cold, calculating stare.

“Dr. Chilton,” he drawls. “How generous of you.”

Oh. Will gulps. *He knows*.

The realization nearly floors him.

“…Chilton, please, think about this. You’re making a huge fucking mistake,” Will urges, wide-eyed. His only response is the recording light on the surveillance camera, silently flickering.

“Oh, Will. It’ll only hurt if you let it.” Hannibal takes a step toward him.

"No." Will’s palms break out in a sweat. His heart leaps once, then hammers in his chest, spurring him into action. “N-no, don’t. Don’t. Stay away from me.”

Will refuses to let Hannibal mark him, he can’t imagine what misery that would be. Not with his brand of empathy. Though, with the number of times he’s inadvertently imprinted on the minds of deranged Alphas just by stepping foot inside a crime scene, he has a pretty good idea.

Hannibal takes a long, determined stride toward him, and Will executes a dash in the opposite direction. Just barely, he dodges out of reach and sprints around the desk for cover, Hannibal giving chase.

“Stop! Can we please just talk about this!? You don’t have to do this. I’ll talk. Okay? I’ll talk,” Will pleads, cowering when Hannibal makes another grab for him. Will shoves the desk forward and sends it crashing into Hannibal’s side.

Hannibal growls and knocks it aside. The pile of drawings flutter and sail around them. Will yelps and tries to take shelter behind the partition, but his foot catches, momentarily throwing him off balance, and it’s all the opening Hannibal needs to close the gap between them.

Will lurches with a cry as Hannibal’s arms snare him from behind, maneuvering him off his feet and against his chest in a chokehold. The thick pheromones of an Alpha high from the rush of a chase penetrates the surrounding air, stirring a flush of reciprocal Omegan pheromones in Will.

“Did you think I didn’t know?” Hannibal tightens his grip and leans in, warm breath tickling Will’s nape. “I know all about you, dear boy. From the moment I inhaled that unfortunate chemical with the bright yellow label on it. Agent Crawford and Ms. Bloom were saturated in it, despite their efforts to conceal your identity. I really was quite saddened to hear you couldn’t make it to my trial, Will.”

“It would have been worth it…” Will grits through his teeth. “Just to see your face.”

Hannibal drags his nose along his pulse and sighs. “It’s too bad. I would have enjoyed it, too.”

The sound of his voice so close to his mating gland makes the hair on Will's body stand up. It’s obvious what comes next. But even years of police training can’t help him now, he’s no match for Hannibal’s raw strength. Will whimpers and kicks his feet, right hand pushing up on Hannibal’s jaw in a last-ditch effort to redirect his teeth. Desperate, he gives off a low warning in his throat. Hannibal growls and takes Will’s neck between his teeth, asserting dominance over him with a dull nip, reminding Will of his place, and Will goes soft. Slick trickles out of him, his hole throbs and aches in a way he's never felt before. Will struggles to hide it, but ultimately knows it’s his body trying to protect him through its own irrational means. A manipulation of sex pheromones to subdue an Alpha threat.

Hannibal hums and whispers, burning into his skin. “Your scent's grown stronger, Will. A sickly sweet perfume. Does being in this position excite you?”

Mortified, Will squeezes his eyes shut, praying he’ll wake up in his room surrounded by his dogs. He shakes his head and purrs in distress, the noise rumbling in his chest.

“Don’t worry, Will. We’ll be seeing a lot of each other’s faces from here on out.”

“Please…” Will whines.

Hannibal takes a fistful of his hair, shoves his head forward, and sinks his teeth into the open canvas of Will’s neck.

Chapter End Notes

I've been pretty busy with moving, so the editing on this one was a bit rushed, but hopefully still enjoyable!

Five

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The sharp pressure of Hannibal's teeth sinking into his flesh creates a broken dam of bonding hormones that crashes over him relentlessly—darkness, pain, pleasure—and springs tears at the corner of Will's eyes. It's simultaneously the best and worst feeling Will's experienced. There's nothing left for him to do but writhe in Hannibal's arms and mewl out, desperate and high-pitched. Engulfed by the swell of hormones, the feeling of finally being *claimed*, Will doesn't realize when he presses his hips back into the Alpha's crotch and grinds wantonly, pants soaked through in slick. The alarm of the cell buzzer is nothing but an inaudible hum, the swirling red lights above them meaningless, overshadowed by his worst fear come true in a single day and the burning shame of arousal in the pit of his stomach.

Hannibal exhales through his nose and loosens his grip, gravity taking hold of them. He keeps his jaw locked on Will's nape, clearly savoring the moment, and with a wet swipe of his tongue—*tasting him*—contentedly laps up the sweet combination of blood, sweat, and secreted pheromones. How long has he waited, Will wonders, to sink his jaws into the crafty Omega who robbed him of his freedom and repay the favor.

It's reassuring, *almost,* knowing that even someone as measured and controlled as Hannibal is not immune to his own set of biological responses. The hard outline of his erection juts into Will's backside, and, *fuck, oh fuck*, if he positions his hips just right, he might—Will groans as Hannibal's thick Alpha cock teases the damp mound of his opening through thin layers of fabric. It's an entirely new and mind-numbing sensation. The most Will's had inside him is his own fingers, and even then he'd been too squicked out to go past two; too ashamed of his own body and needs. Raised in the south, and victim to his father's heavy-handed upbringing, he'd never had access to all the fancy knotting toys Omegas raved about. The shame from his youth had been so severely ingrained in him it still lingered to the day. The thought of taking something so big inside of him, despite his body being designed for it, seems impossible.

Doesn't stop it from being *hot*; doesn't stop Will from wanting to *try*.

Will bites his lip and reaches back with one hand, welcoming Hannibal's head deeper into the space of his neck and encouraging him. Hannibal stills at the touch, and through their newly formed bond, muted disbelief dances through his mind before being wrangled back into cool neutrality.

"Looks like you're enjoying yourself, Will." Chilton's disgustingly pleased voice from the opposite side of the cell is like somebody dumping an oversized bucket of ice-cold water over Will's head. "Sorry to interrupt the fun, you two, but there's a certain chain of protocol we have to follow whenever this happens."

"*What*? I'm—I'm not." Will's mind reels in shock, his body rigid in Hannibal's overbearing grip as he wheels him out of Chilton's sight with a possessive growl.

Will mentally curses himself. Befuddled by hormones just like one of those trashy 50c Alpha and Omega romance paperbacks at the bottom of a clearance bin. Sure, the act of being forcefully bonded and defiled by a psychopath was a lot less painful of an experience than he'd expected—*maybe even pleasurable*, and he'll go to the grave with that one—but that was no excuse. Forced bondings are meant to be excruciatingly agonizing for the victims, nowhere near pleasurable.

Hannibal's arousal burns where it's nestled between his slick coated thighs. Will shudders in disgust.

Regardless of how much slack the media gives Hannibal for his crimes—*poor, misguided Alpha*—he's a deranged serial killer who cannibalizes his victims for nothing other than sheer pettiness. He's the type of monster Will's spent his entire career putting away behind bars, and it's ludicrous that he even has to remind himself. This is a disaster, an honest to fucking god disaster. It should have never happened. He'll be miserable for the rest of his life, trapped by Hannibal's side until one of them drops dead, because there's no other way to break a pair bond, and Chilton just stood by the sidelines and watched it happen. Will's modest dreams of one day settling down with a loving beta partner and starting a family *poof*, gone. Over. Now, he's been hitched to the damned devil. The fucking irony.

Agent Johns and Morgan loitering behind the yellow tape burst into laughter. "Will Graham? The psycho lover? I heard he keeps a shrine to the Chesapeake Ripper in his bedroom. Probably wishes he was an Omega bitch in heat so the Ripper could bend him over. He already acts like one, doesn't he?"

Will grits his teeth at the memory.

He refuses to devolve into a whimpering, blubbering mess in front of Chilton and Hannibal.

There *is* a way to break the bond, after all. It's not impossible, just takes time. Work. A little blood on his hands, maybe.

"What the fuck are you doing!?" Will growls. "Get off of me, you crazy son of a bitch!"

Will throws his elbow back into Hannibal's gut, an action that's surprisingly hard to pull off with the spike of oxytocin and endorphins clouding his judgment. Hannibal is taken off guard and stumbles back, dislodging his teeth from Will's nape, lips stained with blood. Will wriggles out from his arms just as the cell door flies open and Chilton's guards burst in one after another—*tasers, they have tasers*. Will takes one glimpse at their extensive assortment of restraints before he flings himself to the floor at Hannibal's feet, pride be damned. He won't hang around and find out what surprises Chilton has in store for him this time. Indulging the mounting Omegan instinct to hide, he crawls away on both hands and knees and scurries under the bed, out of reach. He doesn't give a shit at this point how it looks.

"Against the wall, now, Lecter!"

An orderly brandishes his taser at Hannibal as two others move fast to restrain him, yanking

the straightjacket past his arms and securing the anti-bite mask over his face. Will can more or less make out the racket by the movement of feet and flare of murderous intent from Hannibal's side of the bond. On his stomach, he cradles his nape in both hands, clenches his jaw in revulsion, and painfully digs his claws into his marred flesh until the blood oozes freely. He wishes he could rip it out, tear out the mark that Hannibal's tainted him with.

"Somebody grab the damned Omega, please."

"Already on it," says Matthew, lowering to his knees at the edge of the bed and peeking under with a sharp—*too sharp, what sharp teeth you have*—grin at Will's huddled form. He waves the taser from side to side. "Come on out, little birdie."

"Don't touch me." Will growls and kicks away his outstretched hand.

Matthew sighs. "C'mon, Lecter. Say the magic words so we can get this over with and you two can get back to fucking. I don't want to have to drag him out." Without warning, he aims the weapon and discharges the shot to the left of Will's head. There's a thunderous impact, electricity crackling and echoing so powerfully that Will involuntarily recoils with a shallow gasp and braces his bloody fingers against the floor.

Hannibal's voice is gruff with vexation and the surge of hormones coursing through his veins when he speaks, muffled beneath the mask, "Is all this really necessary? I see you've grown bored lavishing away at your office, Frederick. With new rank, comes the dull shade of responsibility, and a budding appreciation for theatrics, I see. Come here, Will."

"It *is* necessary when dealing with you," Chilton adds warily.

The command comes down on him like a swift punch to the gut, and for a second Will thinks Matthew's shot hit its mark before it dawns. Alpha voice. The first instance of Hannibal exploiting his newfound power over him. Bonded Alphas are the only individuals able to harness its abusive authority over Omegas, and it's generally frowned upon to use it on anyone other than your mate. Not that it's ever stopped Jack. Will's not sure if Jack does it consciously or not, but the latter would imply—imply what? That he's been aware of Will's gender and just never deemed it important enough to mention? *Goddammit*. He doesn't have time to dwell on that piece of revelation right now. His nape prickles like the dragging of nails and pull of teeth, the sudden urge to *obey* his Alpha. He's already half-way out from under the bed, Matthew dragging his arms the rest of the way.

"There you go. Was that so hard?" Matthew grins down at him. With the help of another orderly, they yank him to his feet and hold him still, inspecting the bite. Matthew lets out a low whistle, eyeing him with glee. "Wow. That's deep. You sure made good work of this one, Doctor. You know, you should really consider yourself lucky, bitch. Out of all the subjects we've thrown his way, you're the only one he's actually bothered to, you know, *tie the knot* with." He snorts a laugh at his own joke. "I'll bet that makes you real wet, *sweetheart*."

Will wants to puke.

Matthew shoves the other orderly aside and presses himself behind Will, thrusting the taser

into his chest. Will freezes and bites his tongue. Matthew tilts his head closer to his neck, takes a subtle whiff at him, and wrinkles his nose in disgust—a reaction Will files away for further dissection. He can't quite put his finger on it, but Matthew unnerves him. It's not just his crass attitude, there's more to it than that, but he's not exactly in any mind or position to examine why. Hannibal glares murder at them from across the room, painted in Will's blood. It reeks of jealousy. Something else for him to file away for later.

While the orderlies make a sideshow of him, Will mentally drifts in the stream of his mind. He stares into nothing and counts from one to three in reverse. Three, Matthew; Two, Hannibal; One, Chilton. It's the order in which he'll exact his revenge, starting first with Chilton. One and two are interchangeable, depending on the circumstances. But his contempt for Chilton has always been a bright and burning beacon, and if it wasn't for him, he'd never fucking be in this goddamn position. Three fish and one baited hook, and he's always been a good fisherman. It'd be interesting if he could make three of them bite at once, Will thinks. Or he could simply lure the biggest fish straight into the line of sight of the smaller ones, sit back, and watch the carnage ensue.

Chilton is speaking again, drowned out by running streams and vengeful lures.

SMACK.

The abrupt open-palmed slap to his face from one of the orderlies is a bitter, stinging shock to his system.

Chilton lets out an exaggerated exhale and pinches the bridge of his nose. "That wasn't necessary, thank you. We don't want to further distress his fragile mental state. There's a good chance it might inadvertently trigger Hannibal's rut now that they've established a bond. And trust me, you do not want to imagine what kind of hell that would be to contain."

Will blinks away the rage boiling inside him and grits his teeth. His voice is eerily calm. "Could you repeat that?"

Chilton taps his clipboard with a pen and studies Will from behind the glass. Coward. He'd gladly throw Will to the lions, but wouldn't risk the blood on his pretty shoes. "I asked how you were feeling."

Will's stare is flat and venomous. "How do you think I'm supposed to *feel*, Dr. Chilton? Try debased. Degraded. Appalled at the sheer volume of malpractice and blatant disregard for human dignity from where I stand."

"That's not what it looked like to me, Will. You said you wanted to talk. Well, here I am, but I need you to be honest with me. This is for your own good. Need I remind you, I'm here to help you." Chilton's patronizing choice of words and false expression of sympathy makes Will bristle.

"You're a little too late, I think. And, I'm sorry. Wait—since when did the act of humiliation equal a helping hand? I must have missed the memo." Trembling with unsuppressed rage, Will risks a glance at Hannibal. He's been eerily quiet throughout their exchange. The bond

flat-lined after Matthew copped a feel.

Their eyes meet, and Will's vision tunnels; he thinks Hannibal might want to devour him by gaze alone. Rattled, he breaks eye contact and looks at his feet, nape hot and prickling, itching at the base of his skull. He feels sick, violated. Covered in blood and slick, tossed around like a plaything. Hysteria rises in his throat, and Will roughly swallows it.

It occurs to Will, then, that Hannibal gets the full body restraint with four decked out orderlies, two on either side of him, while all Will gets are two lax goons. They're purposefully underestimating him because he's an Omega. A weak, frail little submissive.

Unfortunately for them, that's the final straw—*their mistake*.

Will lifts his chin and shoots Chilton a feral smile, revealing sharp canines, and with a deep, steadying breath, he slams the back of his head into Matthew's nose with a sickening thud. In the confusion, he tears free and tackles the second orderly with a fierce snarl, pummeling fists into his face. The stun guns are just a ruse, they wouldn't dare damage Chilton's goods. Will basks in the knowledge he's successfully called their bluff when Chilton shouts at them to lower their weapons.

He slams the orderly's wrist into the floor, wrestles the stun gun from his fingers, and rises in a defensive stance. But it's not enough to sate his anger. With a ferocious grunt, he stomps his foot down on the man's hand, once, twice, three times for good measure. The sound of bones cracking out of place is terribly satisfying—*that's for putting hands on me, asshole*. Panting with exertion and adrenaline, Will brandishes the taser, wild-eyed at the remaining men crowded around Hannibal. The door to their cell gapes wide open, and realistically he knows he probably wouldn't get far, but the prospect of freedom is tempting. Too tempting of a chance to pass up. He takes a tentative step toward the door. Two, three, four, five. Closer now. The orderlies fan out in white, receding waves.

Even the barest, fleeting taste of freedom is better than rolling over and accepting his fate.

His feet stop inches from Hannibal. The bond flares awake, and Will's Omega preens at the flood of pleasure arising from having pleased his Alpha. He's on auto-pilot, and though he knows there's something deeply wrong, works the stark white bindings on his restraints loose enough for Hannibal to free himself. Hannibal rewards him with a low purr, and Will instinctively presents his nape. He's not in control of his own body; Hannibal's words from earlier loop through his head on repeat, "*Come here, Will.*"

Matthew's groans of pain and his co-workers' laughter drift over them like a frigid wind. Will blinks, furrows his brows, and gawks at Hannibal's forehead. He whips his head over to the open hallway, but it's too late. With a simple press of a button, the lock shutters into place with the same force of dread constricting his chest.

"Alpha voice is a particularly tricky gift, nobody gets it right on the first try. There's tone, pitch, and intent, all things one has to consider." Hannibal's eyes crinkle in delight. He lifts the mask from his face and chuckles in bemusement. "I'll admit, I was a bit rusty, but I'm proud of you, Will. You follow orders so well. Today is just full of surprises, isn't it?"

“Y-you… why?” Will drops the taser with a dreadful clatter and holds his head in horror. “Oh, god.”

Not long after, they come back and retrieve the gun. Will doesn’t fight when Matthew, nose freshly bandaged, takes him by the throat and slips a collar on him, locking it in place.

Chapter End Notes

Got busy with moving, but I'm back. Thanks for commenting and kudos! It definitely motivates me not to give up on this.

Six

Will takes shelter under the bed, ears tuning into every shift and movement from Hannibal. He's succumbed to his flighty, Omegan nesting habits; classic cave-dwelling behavior from the time of the hunt. It's only natural he'd resort to baser instincts. A lesser Omega would have prostrated themselves at Hannibal's feet after the first whiff, so he's able to fashion at least something resembling pride, shoddy as it may be. It'll take a lot more from Hannibal to get him to bend *that way*.

It's been hours since Chilton and his followers have gone, and he's had plenty of time drifting in the shadows, racking his brain for answers. Naturally, he comes up empty. What he does gather from his time spent staring at the underside of the bed, though, is that the frame isn't very sturdy. If Hannibal were to hypothetically have his way with him, there's a good chance it might cave under the weight of two grown men. Or, one grown man and one Omega, since that's all he is anymore.

Will quickly abandons that line of thinking. He doesn't want to spend anymore time imagining Hannibal and him in a bed. Together. Will grits his teeth and drops his forehead, rolling his fevered skin across the cool floor. He's shaky and nauseous, sweating and leaking from every damned orifice, and those images definitely aren't helping any.

Suppressant withdrawal.

He has nothing better to do than scratch, reaching to get his nails into the place where Hannibal's claim has permeated and gouge it out. It proves difficult with the collar in the way, pushing down on his nape in a throbbing reminder. The collar is pink, and at the front is an etching of the Omegan symbol, like they didn't already have enough proof of his damned gender. But it's been fashioned to resemble a claiming collar. Matthew's reassured him that despite the lack of rhinestones—a gaudy Omegan trend on the rise—this one comes equipped with a lovely shock mechanism, and he's even been kind enough to demonstrate it for him.

Scratch, scratch.

Hannibal moves, a brief but deliberate pass in front of the bed, the floor vibrating with the tap-tap of plastic soles. Will instinctively sucks in a breath and stills. He's saturated in Omegan distress pheromones, the room is near suffocating with them. Hannibal remains entirely unaffected by it, but Will's not surprised in the least. The man's a textbook sadist, and it's obvious that this is nothing but a game to him, just a way to psych Will out and find his breaking point. If he truly wanted him out, all he'd have to do is say the words.

That's the horrifying part.

He's been reduced to a puppet. His own free will nothing more than a bundle of long and silvery strings protruding from his limbs, manifested by Hannibal's Alpha voice.

"Don't be shy now, Will," says Hannibal, peeking under the bed. From Will's point of view, he's all shadows aside from his reddish eyes. "You and I have a lot to talk about."

“Oh—” The breath he’s holding rushes from his lungs at once, voice hoarse. “Then talk.”

Hannibal considers him for a second before replying, “I’d rather we speak face to face. I can’t imagine you being wedged into that position for hours on end is very comfortable.”

“I’m very comfortable.” It wasn’t Alpha-like behavior to seek small, dark places in times of stress—so *what the hell did he know?* Will huffs and anxiously grooms himself, licking the dried blood from his fingers. “Here’s fine.”

“Away from prying eyes, my dear?”

“Away from you. And don’t call me that.”

Hannibal tuts. “Now, Will, is that any way to speak to your Alpha?”

“You’re not—” *Oh, but he is.* Will swallows and drags his hands over the underside of the bed, instinctively scent-marking his territory, another damned Omegan self-soothing behavior. “I’m just being careful, doctor. Prying ears and prying eyes, remember?” Didn’t take a genius to know that Chilton had bugged the room.

“I want you to think about it, Will. And when you do, I’ll be here.” There’s a pause in Hannibal’s dance of intimidation as he rises, feet disappearing with another tap-tap-tap, and Will’s lungs collapse in relief.

Think about what? Will wants to ask, only no words come out. Just the bitter-sweet stench of his own fear.

*

Will thinks about it. He thinks hard and long until his head throbs in retaliation. But he doesn’t know *what* exactly he’s supposed to be thinking about.

The gaps in his memory might be a good start, though. As an Omega, there’s all manner of offenses that could land him a spot in BOF, and this ranges from anywhere to petty crimes to murder. But is he really capable of doing something that terrible?

You've been thinking about it for a long time now, haven't you? Will is dismayed by how quickly his brain throws him under the bus. But when has it ever worked in his favor?

“It’s a good thing you’ve stopped taking those dreadful things,” the voice in his head says, the same tone and lilt as Hannibal. *"Think about it, Will.”*

Suppressant overdose. Loss of memory. *This one’s a biter.*

It’s a violent click-clack of pieces tumbling into place.

Will whines, gut lurching.

How the fuck is he supposed to digest this?

*

“Oh, Will.” Hannibal braces one of his hands on the top side of the mattress and peers expectantly him. “You reek of nothing but doom and gloom, my dear. I think you worry too much.” He smiles, a flash of sharp fangs. “Ready to come out now?"

Will startles at the proximity of his voice and scoots against the wall, steeling himself for the inevitable. “That’s up to you, isn’t it?” he hisses, territorial hostility rising in his chest at having an Alpha invade his poor excuse for a nest.

“Don’t think too hard, darling.” Hannibal lowers onto his stomach, bringing himself down to Will’s level.

An uneasy silence falls over them.

Will scans a wary gaze over Hannibal’s face. He’ll admit that Hannibal looks much softer this way, cheek pressed against the floor in a reflection of Will, hair loose and delicately framing his brow. He resists the urge to roll his eyes; it’ll take a hell of a lot more than a few Omegan calming gestures to fool him, because that’s precisely what Hannibal is aiming for by lowering himself and giving them the illusion of equal ground.

Nice try.

“You won’t kill me, and judging by the massive chunk you took out of my neck, I don’t think you plan on sparing me, either. So, why’s that?” Will retorts, aggressively skirting Hannibal’s attempts at eye contact.

“Chilton and the others see you as something weak and fragile,” says Hannibal. There’s an amused hint in his voice, like he doesn’t quite believe it himself. “Like a piece of well-loved china. At the end of the day, you shove it back into its cabinet.”

“Yeah, well, there’s been a lot said about me. Fragile seems to be the general consensus around here.” Will snorts and narrows his eyes, consciously stifling his growl by biting down on the inside of his cheek. It’s best not to arouse Hannibal’s inherent Alphan aggression and risk creating another scene. He’ll need to tread carefully from here on out. “Okay. And you? I wanna know how you see me.”

He gets an eyeful of Hannibal’s sharp predator teeth when his lips spread into a wide, disarming smile. “The mongoose I want under the house when the snakes slither by.”

Will blinks, taken off guard. “What?”

Hannibal's palm snakes its way into his nest, contaminating it with his scent like dark reaching tendrils. Will spits out a hiss with the same ferociousness of a feral cat and swipes with his claws in warning. *That's too fucking close.* His suppressant withdrawal is getting worse, and there’s a 50/50 chance he’ll be begging for Hannibal’s knot by the end of the day if this keeps up. He’s liable to go into a fucking stress-induced heat.

“Don't even think about touching me. Conversation over,” Will snarls. “Leave me the hell alone.”

“Now, now,” Hannibal sighs in disapproval, squeezing down on the Omegan pressure point near his radial artery with deft fingers. “That really is no way to treat your bonded. I’ve been patient, generous even, but I think it’s time you came out from there.”

“Make… me,” Will gasps sharply. “Fuck—if you want it so bad, then say it. Go on. What’s stopping you?!”

Heat rips through him, Hannibal’s touch stimulating the Omegan pleasure-receptors in his brain. Will shivers, swallowing a whine.

"It's my understanding that you enjoy it." Hannibal smiles. “It’s only natural for an Omega to develop a fondness for their Alpha’s voice, no cause for shame, Will.”

“…fuck you. God, fuck you.”

“Don’t be so impatient,” Hannibal growls and yanks him by the wrist. "We'll get to that part soon enough."

"Wait, wait—" Will whimpers, squinting under the fluorescents.

The transition from black to white leaves him disoriented, the starkness of their shared confines is hell on the eyes. This place wasn’t designed with Omegas in mind. There’s a noticeable lack of blues—a color often meant to soothe Omegas—within the white-gold trim, and, if Will's being honest, the hem of Hannibal’s navy blue pant legs brings him zero sense of comfort.

Hannibal just deposits him there, limbs splayed out as his eyes struggle to readjust. When Will crawls to his feet, he's vibrating. Fear, anger, panic, the hostility of being cornered out of his own territory by a rival Alpha.

Will throws the first punch.

It’s violent—fists, teeth, and claws, and it all comes to a screeching halt as Hannibal wrestles him down and straddles him. Sensing defeat, Will tries pathetically crawling back to his nest, but Hannibal is quicker than him, stronger, and before he knows it he’s sprawled out under Hannibal’s weight in a pool of his own sickly sweet slick, shirt inconveniently ridden up his abdomen. But he doesn’t want to simply be forced to roll over and show his belly. Not like this.

Will grunts, dips his jaw in a defensive gesture, and fists a handful of Hannibal’s hair, tugging to try and redirect the alpha’s teeth away from his neckline. Both of them are covered in bruises and scratch marks. Not once during their struggle does Hannibal bother to harness his voice or illustrate his knowledge on how to incapacitate an Omega through petty biological tricks. By doing so, he’s made it clear to Will, that despite every cheap card at his disposal, it takes nothing for an Alpha to assert his dominance over an Omega.

Hannibal snares Will's wrists above his head with a low rumble, pinning him to the ground like easy prey. Will's lips part with harsh pants of breath, watching the blood oozing from the angry claw marks decorating Hannibal's lightly stubbled jawline.

There's no deafening alarms or ear-splitting buzzers, not even the rap of a nightstick against the glass this time around. Just silence. The sounds of their exertion and Hannibal's low growl demanding Will's submission.

Their altercation from an outsider's perspective must resemble nothing more than stereotypical play-mating between bond mates, albeit a more violent form of it. It probably doesn't help that being vigorously subdued by an Alpha whom his body recognizes as his, has Will sporting the most painful erection of his sad, pathetic life. A visible bloom of red spreads downward from his cheeks, past the pale peek of skin beneath his shirt collar, and not just from the effort, but his rapidly approaching mock heat; be it from stress, his body's last endeavor to flush out the remainder of chemicals, or Hannibal's constant manhandling, there's no way to tell for certain.

But there's a sick sense of satisfaction that befalls Will when he realizes that Hannibal isn't faring much better himself, judging by the hardness that grazes his hip and the way his rich and heady scent has heightened past the boundaries of polite interest. A metallic tinge of blood that threatens to scramble his brain into needy, submissive mush, rather than the subtle undertone from before. The distinct smell of arousal, as Hannibal so elegantly put it.

He's definitely enjoying this.

Hannibal licks the sharp edges of his canines and presses the entirety of his body weight over Will as he leans down, inches away from his flushed, panting face. "Pleasantries out of the way, let's move on to more pressing matters. I want you to tell me everything. Everything buried in that pretty little head of yours—I want to know how you managed it and I want you to be truthful, Will."

"G-get off…" Shame coils in Will's stomach, the promise of Hannibal's cruel teeth sending a thrill of pleasure straight down to his throbbing slit as his warm puff of breath caresses his parted lips.

He thinks you're pretty.

The word *pretty* is like somebody tossing a lit match onto him. A familiar burning sensation springs to life at his nape and creeps through his veins the way the heat emitting from a flickering flame of a candle does; the beginnings of preheat. Will writhes in anguish, waves of desire lapping over him, threatening to pull him under. When Hannibal makes a slight adjustment of his weight to halt his wriggling, his erection digs into Will's lower stomach. Will chokes out a cracked whine, arching his hips up to meet him.

With their faces mere inches apart, it wouldn't be difficult for him to rise up and close the gap between them in a wet, seal of lips. Will completely drifts to the soothing darkness of his eyelids when Hannibal starts speaking to him in that strangely arousing accent of his.

What kind of kisser is Hannibal?

Will imagines their first kiss being sharp, brutal, and full of teeth; tongues mingled with the taste of blood. That's his first impression of a monster who makes the very air around him crackle with his presence.

Then Will remembers that's the same mouth that's bitten, torn, and feasted on other people's organs, and that's enough to bring him crashing back down to reality. Hannibal slaps his cheek a few times to help draw him out of his stupor. He has to realize what's happening, especially with a nose like his. There's nothing that gets past a thoroughbred's superior olfactory sense; aside from a maximum dosage of high-grade suppressants, but the smell of arousal in the air is palpable. It makes him wonder what kind of angle Hannibal is seeking to play here, what sort of hell he plans to inflict on him when he eventually succumbs to the unavoidable. Crimes of a sexual nature have never figured into his profile, but then again, the act of forcefully bonding his victims was never on that list until now. It seems that where Will is concerned, Hannibal is as unpredictable as ever. It's uncharacteristically clumsy of him.

Does Hannibal want to fuck or interrogate him?

Will winces at the unwelcome touch and swallows with a loud click. Somehow, he finds the strength to muster up a shaky taunt. "Or what? Are you going to kill me? You'd be doing me a fucking favor."

He shuts his eyes, sweat beading his brow. Cool streams, think of cool streams. He can't go into heat now. Not now.

Hannibal sighs and tightens his hold with such force it's guaranteed to bruise. "Ah-ah. Don't go in there, don't go inside. Look me in the eye while speaking."

Will's eyes fly open at the command. It's as if an invisible force has taken hold of him. Pain so great that it knocks the breath right out of him in a shuddering sigh, and when he tries to find his next words, it's Hannibal's voice that plays out in his head instead of his own. "I don't need to look. I see you just fine— you've made sure of that."

Hannibal hums, considering. "I've heard of your unique gift of perception. Better yet, pure empathy. You can assume anyone's point of view, be it friends, family, lovers, myself included. But it's the killers you fancy stepping into for a day, isn't it? Fascinating boy."

Will's had the misfortune of wading too deep into the water as a child, he's had first-hand experience with drowning, and right now that's exactly how he fucking feels. Drowning in heat, deep pools of red, drowning in Hannibal. Hannibal doesn't categorize himself as a killer, but something that exists vaguely between that and lover, which is laughable.

"Y-yeah…well. You wouldn't be the… first," Will stammers weakly. He's been pried apart and scrutinized by more psychiatrists than he can count on both hands. It's only natural that Hannibal would have heard about him at some point. He's been quite the talk in their little circles. "Or so I've heard."

Will turns his focus from Hannibal to one of the cameras just outside of his vision, counting in his head; 3 backward to 1. It's getting harder to think with Hannibal speaking for him in his own skull like he's always been there. Harder to focus, harder to breathe, and harder to

fucking care about right or wrong when it's all a losing battle anyway. There's no steady ground for mortality in this place, not when the reality is that Hannibal and he are not so different.

"I'm not going to ask you again—"

"Pigs," Will blurts, cutting him off. The rest of his confession spills forth without pause. "You're transforming them, these pigs, elevating filth into works of art just because you can. The minute I stepped into your world—witnessed Cassie Boyle impaled on a rack of antlers as a direct taunt to the FBI, I could feel you burrowing your way inside me. Most of the time it was distant and lonely, huge gaping holes of nothingness, but there were brief moments when I… I felt it. Felt the life you'd drained slip through my fingers as if it were my own and... and… oh, god—"

"P-please… I n-need to… it burns, burns…" Will gasps. "Alpha."

Will drives them both upward, breath ragged, licking his lips before pressing them to the corner of Hannibal's jaw. Eagerly, he darts his tongue out, dragging it slowly across the fresh lines of oozing cuts. A high, happy noise emits from the back of his throat as he begins to groom his Alpha, applying light kitten licks to the wounds there. He's completely yielded to his instincts, the tugging on his nape gone quiet, a whiny stuttering purr starting in his chest. A shy glance at Hannibal and Will playfully steals a quick, wet swipe over the plush curve of his lips.

Hannibal is taken off guard, still attempting to piece it together when he flinches, a rare flicker of surprise at the feel of Will's tongue seeking him out. He moves just out of reach, disappointment spreading across his face; under the assumption that his new toy has broken and that perhaps he'd misjudged him. Will releases the tension in his muscles, going limp like a good little omega when Hannibal subsequently loosens his grip. Will whines and lifts his chin, proudly displaying his neck with a sweet purr. Hannibal won't be able to tell the difference between a mock heat or a real one, and the chances for either is likely in this scenario. He may suspect the likelihood of a ruse, but Will's suppressants haven't completely vacated his system yet. The most he'll smell is a dull, increasing sweetness, and Will has always been a good actor; it's part of the job.

Will can't believe his own stupidity. He's been so wrapped up in his own self-pity he's completely failed to recall an awfully important piece of information, conveniently dangling inches away from him this whole time, and there's no better opportunity than now.

With a snarl, Will surges up and sinks his teeth into the center of Hannibal's neck. There's no turning back now, not after solidifying their bond both ways; but if he wants to stay in the game, it's the only way to level the playing field. Will moans through his nose, thick gushes of blood and Alpha pheromones flooding his mouth. He wraps his arms around Hannibal's neck, yanking him closer as he rides out the euphoria. An Alpha's blood acts as a natural aphrodisiac to Omegas, but with his mock heat already gearing up, that's a risk he's willing to take. There's a damn good reason you're able to find rows upon rows of glimmering red vials stocked alongside most high-grade suppressants on the black market, one that Will aims to take full advantage of. By consuming a certain amount of Alpha blood, it allows an Omega's vocal chords to temporarily shift in a way that grants them their own means of suggestion as

self-defense against an abusive mate. And with Will sealing them together as bond mates, he's given himself a permanent weapon.

"Till death do us part." Will huffs out a laugh against Hannibal's throat. He goes willingly when Hannibal slams him down with a deep growl, tightening a hand around his neck. "Oh, please," he says, gazing up at him. "Hurting me is just as good as hurting yourself."

"For better, for worse." Hannibal smiles darkly.

Will licks the ruby traces from his lips, savoring the bitter, stimulating taste of revenge. A sultry purr rises deep from his chest, offering Hannibal a sharp flash of his blood-stained teeth as he gently wraps his fingers around his loosening hold on his rumbling neck and says, "Why don't you go on ahead and lay back, sweetheart?"

Hannibal goes stock-still, face twitching in displeasure, and while he does exhibit a slightly worrying amount of self-control, it delights Will to know that he's currently undergoing the same degree of pain as he did. It's his own fault, he should have never taken to ordering Will around as an amusing pastime. It's all fun and games until the shoe is on the other foot.

They size each other up in silence for what feels like a long, nerve-wracking eternity before Hannibal finally purses his lips and bitterly concedes. He removes his hand from Will's neck and lays back against the floor; Will enthusiastically reverses their positions. He wastes no time planting his groin flush against Hannibal's, wiggling his hips until the thickest part of the man's cock settles against his weeping hole, groaning openly in relief. Mock heats may not be as intense as the real thing, but that doesn't make them any less painful to endure.

Will coyly bites his lip and pouts down at Hannibal mockingly, his blue eyes now transformed to deep, smoldering gold. "What did you think would happen? Were you just going to deliberately trigger my heat and expect to sit back and watch me beg? You're not as clever as you think you are. But I think I've already proven that. Twice now."

He leans in to take a nip at Hannibal's jaw before he mouths his way down to the musky scent gland and greedily latches on, suckling at it, while he grinds himself down against the man's stiff cock through the layer of their clothes. Hannibal tastes as amazing as he smells, and to willing partake feels like committing the most egregious of sins. Oh god, he's never felt this excruciatingly horny in his life—heat or not, it's like he's regressed into a hormonal teenager again—and while that should concern him, right now the only thing he cares about is appeasing the burning, aching need to be filled.

With a loud smacking noise, Will releases him and whispers breathily against his damp neck. "I have a better idea. Let's make a deal. "

Will tilts his chin up and stares fixedly into the vacant lens of the camera as he unabashedly bares his throat to Hannibal. At the end of the day, all it takes is using the right type of bait if you want to lure the biggest fish out from under the murky, knee-deep waters, and what follows after that simply requires a bit of patience. His mouth drops open in a moan when Hannibal hungrily bites down on his sweet glands above the constricting line of his collar and peppers the column of his once unblemished skin in a series of violent teeth marks and bruising red patches; it's ugly and possessive. It's perfect. Will's Omegan side is salivating at

having won the biological lottery by soaring numbers in every desirable category for an Alpha mate there is.

Satisfied with his work, Hannibal teasingly slides his hands down Will's waist to squeeze at the curve of his hips before he whispers conspiratorially against his hot neck, "Let's hear it, then."

Seven

Chapter Notes

> More power struggles before anything. I'm really sorry for the lack of updates (I know, it sucks) but with everything going on I'm trying my best and posting when I can. Thank you for the comments and kudos and to those who have stuck around! It always makes my day and encourages me to keep writing <3

It doesn't take a whole lot of persuading to get Hannibal on board with his idea.

If that happens to fall through, he has multiple backup plans already set into place.

Chilton won't be dumb enough to grant him visitation rights, but if Will can play the obedient pet and rack up the good behavior points, he might be able to convince him to make a phone call. One phone call is all Will needs to make this whole place come crashing down.

But in the meantime, if Chilton wants a show, he'll get one.

"Sexual frustration, aggression, dominance," Will says suddenly, drawing back from their exaggerated, closed-mouthed kiss, just enough to whisper in the gap between them. "It's all fundamental."

Everyone is under the impression that Hannibal is a victim of his unstable biology, his innate Alphan need for dominance and control. That's where Will comes in, it's his job to relieve those violent urges, and vice versa.

Hannibal's sharp teeth tug the bottom of his lip. "The root of evil?"

Will tries hard not to dwell on how amazingly sexy it is. "Yes."

"You're all I have," Will hiccups, mock tears rolling down his cheeks. He says it loud enough for the cameras to hear, voice wobbling. "I need you to help me. Please."

"You're in heat," Hannibal points out helpfully.

"Yes." Will refrains from rolling his eyes. "This is the longest I've gone without my suppressants…"

Whatever he meant to say next dies in his throat, thoughts turning to static when Hannibal tangles one hand around the back of his curls and crushes their lips together again. There's nothing fake about it. He has to admit, he's oddly grateful for the distraction, and what's the point of being modest? In this damned cage, they're both slaves to their biology.

He rocks his hips down, savoring the delicious friction as Hannibal coaxes his mouth open in a wet gasp. The slick seeps through his pants and spreads across his front in a dark, wet patch that grows wetter with every matching upward thrust from Hannibal. Their tongues brush together, and the taste of copper—of Hannibal—sends a jolt of heat straight to his leaking hole. When they finally separate to catch their breath, saliva mingled with blood comes away in a pinkish string that clings to Will's kiss-swollen lips.

Hannibal kisses exactly how Will imagined.

The bond on his nape ripples in pleasure and Will bites back a moan. He feels powerful, brimming with dark giddiness. If he wanted to, he could make Hannibal kneel at his feet with a single purr; the thought alone is enough to nearly make him cum on the spot.

The rush of Alpha blood pulses heavily through his veins, leaving goosebumps in its wake, his heart pounding with adrenaline. Will understands now why Omegas are so addicted to it, so desperate for that quick hit of dopamine and power that they're willing to do anything to obtain it. But the bunk, over-saturated product they sell on the black market could never compare to unfiltered thoroughbred blood, not after tasting it from the source. Hannibal has ruined him, in more ways than one, and Will knows he'll never be able to settle for anything less.

Will shivers and scrambles to right his palms on the floor before he goes face-first into Hannibal's chest like a swooning Omega. He didn't think it possible to produce this much slick, but if this is any indicator, it can't be long until the chemicals have vacated his system. The new gush of wetness trickles down the insides of his thighs and onto Hannibal, but Will is beyond feeling shame. He bites his lip and speeds his pace, hips stuttering as he gazes down at Hannibal.

Maybe it's the heat-fog speaking, but if Hannibal were to make a move now, Will honestly thinks he'd let him. They're already bonded, what's stopping Hannibal from taking what's rightfully his? A deeply loathsome part of himself wishes Hannibal would just fuck him and get it over with. Will's breath escalates, high and shallow. The thought of Hannibal's knot lodged deep inside him shouldn't make him this horny, but, fuck, it does.

He wonders if Hannibal is able to smell the inexperience on him.

"Are you excited, Doctor?" Will breathes, slamming his hips down in emphasis. The hardness of his cock nudging Will's hole speaks for itself.

"Hannibal," he says, darting his tongue out and catching the remainder of their kiss.

Will's hips falter. "…What?"

"I want you to address me as Hannibal," says Hannibal. "With such an exciting turn of events, I think we're past formalities, don't you?"

"Oh, *Doctor Lecter*. And here I thought you'd be into that sort of thing." Will teases his palm down Hannibal's broad chest and leans back with a ridiculing snort.

"Well, then," Hannibal grins, amused. "I'm sorry to disappoint."

Frustrated at Hannibal for tearing him out of the moment, he pushes up into a sitting position and sweeps the limp curls from his forehead, smothering Hannibal's erection with the full weight of his ass as punishment. A cold shower would be fantastic right about now, but he's doubtful Hannibal would let him wander too far out of his reach reeking like he is with pheromones. He's not sure he's prepared to bare it all for the cameras quite yet.

"Don't forget," Will sighs. "We barely even know each other."

"Do we?"

The implication there gives Will pause. "What is that supposed to mean? Hey—*goddammit*, stop."

Hannibal's inquisitive fingers circle and tug at Will's waistband; Hannibal's way of physically gauging how far gone he is, considering he's lost the ability to rely on his trusty bloodhound nose. Despite the whiny protests of his Omegan half, Will's still coherent enough to establish boundaries between them through violence, if necessary.

"I'm the one calling the shots now." Will hisses, smacking away his hands and pinning them to the floor. "What did you mean 'do we'?"

Hannibal hikes a brow and smiles as if Will is nothing but a misbehaving pup. "The type of memory loss you've exhibited is concerning. I've never witnessed a case so severe. I'm sorry, Will." The concern lacing Hannibal's voice is irritatingly artificial. "But do you not remember showing up at my front door in the middle of the night, disoriented and frantic? This must have been just a week after Jack called you back to the field."

"Oh. C'mon." Will draws up and laughs out in disbelief. Another lie. He's almost relieved. "I don't believe you."

"What reason would I have to lie now?"

"You don't need a reason for weaving lies. That's what you do."

There would have been at least some evidence or report of him taking a fifty-mile hike past state lines for a midnight rendezvous with a suspected serial killer.

He's had an episode or two, sure, but Hannibal is a brilliantly minded Alphan psychologist, who's already proved how remarkably well versed he is on the subject of Omegan health and wellness. He wouldn't put it past Chilton to disclose his medical file to Hannibal after a little prodding. It's an Alpha's right to know the ins and outs of their Omega, after all.

"Don't worry. I'm confident that once your body has expelled the excess chemicals, you'll regain partial memory at the very least," says Hannibal, carrying on with his petty distortions of the truth.

Will silences him with another kiss and low purr. This close he can see the warm glow of his heat imbued eyes reflecting off of Hannibal's red. "If this is your idea of sexy talk," Will

whispers, pausing to lick his lips. “It’s appalling. No more talking. Okay? Oh, and that’s not a question, that’s an order.” He wouldn’t dare pass up an opportunity to use his voice, and Will knows, Hannibal, like any good Alpha, will have no say in the matter. "Lay down and shut up."

Hannibal is over complicating things, focusing his sights on the wrong target, which isn't what they agreed. They won’t get anywhere if he keeps grappling for control like this. Maybe the best distraction is to just let instinct take over.

“Fuck, I hate you,” Will growls, burying himself in Hannibal’s scent gland. "You smell so good."

Unbearable heat spreads across his skin like wildfire, and Will whimpers, breathing Hannibal's scent to help dull the burn. Hannibal's pheromones had spiked at the first signs of Will's heat, and Will impulsively seeks out the man’s scent gland with greedy, wet suckles, desperate for that addictive, bitter-sweet tonic on his tongue again. He wishes he could drown in it. Will bumps their jaws together, rubbing his soft cheeks against his coarse stubble in an act of subtle play-mating.

From there, things are a heat-fevered blur.

There’s no way to measure time, as Hannibal’s special privileges extend to neither clocks nor windows, but if his heat has already progressed to this level of blind agony, he reckons it’s been more than a day. None of that seems to matter when Hannibal emits a deep, sonorous rumble, and Will instinctively moves his hips in a desperate bid for more, indescribable joy erupting in his chest. It’s sad. Thirty years of existence, and he’s never personally been the object of an Alpha’s purr, not even from his own father. The sound of it stirs something deep and buried inside him, begging to claw its way out and roll around on its back like a frisky pup. Will’s purring increases in pitch and warmth for Hannibal, and he showers the fresh bite mark on his neck with fond laps of his tongue.

His Alpha.

Before Will realizes it, he’s yanking off his sweat-damp shirt, tugging it past the wild mess of curls and flinging it to the side blindly. The cool air from the ventilation system almost makes him cry out in relief, but the feeling is only temporary. Hannibal responds by gliding his much larger hands down Will’s waist, gazing hungrily at the new display of skin. There are two things that will effectively put an end to this mind-numbing itch: Will reaching orgasm or taking Hannibal’s knot. Will at least has some mental clarity and the luxury of choice. It’s a mock-heat in response to stress—still unbeknownst to Hannibal—not a real one.

“Like what you see?” Will smirks, grabs Hannibal’s chin between his fingers, and leans back, giving him a nice view of his plump, rosy nipples. “That’s—” he breathes, rocking forward. “Obviously a *big* yes.”

Hannibal merely snarls.

Will tilts his head, baring his neck. “What’s wrong, Alpha?”

Not that he expects to get a response, not after he's effectively rendered Hannibal speechless beneath him, but he can't help taunting the man at every opportunity, consequences be damned. You don't repeatedly poke the beast and expect to get away unscathed.

Maybe Will doesn't want to.

There's an ugly part of himself he's denied for years, brewing silently at the back of his head that yearns for an Alpha like Hannibal. A tiny, treacherous part of him that clamors to be put in his place and bent over like a bitch. Will might not be the typical spineless, meek little Omega, but that still doesn't erase his evolutionary and primary need for a mate capable of earning his submission. He's aware of the risk, he just doesn't care.

Will moans and quivers, arms nearly buckling under him as he pants out, "Do you want to fuck me, Hannibal?"

Hannibal inhales sharply through his nose, eyes drifting shut, grip stilling. Any other Alpha would have already stripped the clothes from him and forced their knot inside like a rabid dog; or come in their pants within the first few seconds of Will rutting against him, fully clothed, as if they were horny teenagers fumbling around on their parents' living room couch. Hannibal's self-restraint thus far is downright incredible.

"No, no." Will coos mockingly and slaps his cheek, hard. "Look at me, Alpha."

How does it feel to be bossed around?

"You know, Will," says Hannibal, eyes flitting open, teeth bared as he wrinkles his nose in disgust. "This kind of behavior is what got you here in the first place."

Huh?

Will's stomach flops, the bond tugging at his collar in warning. "I- I told you not to talk."

A loud, echoing crack fills the room, and hot pressure swells in his sinuses. Hannibal headbutts him, breaks through their bond like rusted old chains, and knocks the insolence out of him in a pained grunt.

"Fucker--" Will staggers back and slumps forward.

Somehow, he's not surprised that the so-called rules of bonding don't seem to apply to Hannibal.

"How?" Will sucks in a ragged breath, sweaty cheek pressed up awkwardly against Hannibal's. "Please… I-I can't- please, god, just let me come."

"Whose fault is that?" says Hannibal, stroking the hair above his nape possessively. "Good Omegas get rewarded, not naughty ones. You shouldn't play so much, darling."

"Ah…" Pain travels from his bite to his gut and Will chokes out a miserable whine, going slack in Hannibal's hold. "I'm going to die. I should just let you rot in here for life—the both of us."

“Now, now.” Hannibal nuzzles along the side of Will’s head and scents him. The breathy sounds of an Alpha appraising his heat pheromones this close to his ear make the hairs on his skin stand up and Will involuntarily gulps down a mouthful of Hannibal's scent, which only worsens the ache--that terrible substance so unique to his Alpha caught at the roof of his mouth like a slow-moving poison.

A lump forms at the back of his throat, a full-body shudder devolving into a soft, placating whine as Will sways his hips in invitation. It's an Omegan mating signal, demonstrating his willingness to mate.

Good omegas get rewarded.

Hannibal appears satisfied and begins to rub comforting circles on the small of Will's back. “There’s no need for such dramatics, Will. You appear to be suffering from a stress-related heat—it’s nothing so serious as to cause death.”

Typical. It's exactly what an Alpha would say, always trying to downplay and disregard an Omega’s pain unless it benefits them in some way. Will arches his spine in response, sniffling against the discomfort in his nose. “No shit, Doctor. Took you long enough to notice."

It hurts like hell, but there isn't any considerable damage to his nose. No telltale signs of bleeding or broken bones. Hannibal had simply intended to disarm him by methodically calculating the rate of force so as not to leave a blemish on his mate’s pretty face. Will rolls his head to the side and gazes longingly at the underside of the bed, his one meager shred of salvation.

“I wasn’t finished,” Hannibal interrupts.

Will’s bare nipples feel like they’re on fire pressed up against Hannibal’s chest; the feel of their shared body heat is unbearable. He grits his teeth with a growl and fights to break free from Hannibal. “Yeah? Neither was I. I’m not gonna ask how you managed to counter my voice, I don’t suspect you’ll divulge that information. Color me unsurprised. Maybe if you’d let, ugh...”

Hannibal clamps a hand over his nape and maneuvers his fingers past the collar, fingers digging painfully into his Omegan pressure point. “There wasn't anything to 'counter'. You never did go to omega finishing school did you, Will? Couldn’t afford it, or maybe you despised the idea of it? The thought of being forced to participate in all those stuffy customs built on the back of old fashioned gender roles. If you had gone, you might have come away with a greater understanding of a two-way bond.”

Will trembles, then melts in Hannibal's arms, scruffed like a pup. “Fuck you," he whispers, blinking back the tears. "…you must feel so goddamn lucky being born an Alpha. You're just like the rest of them."

Hannibal wasn't special, he wouldn't save Will, and he definitely couldn't be trusted to stick to the fucking plan.

"You two look comfy." Matthew laughs and slams their meal trays on the metal surface connected to the service slot. "The boys and I could hear your cries from down the hallway, Graham. Oh, Doctor Lecter!" he mocks in a high, grating voice. "I knew you had it in you. Good thing Lecter's the only Alpha on this level, we don't need you stirring up the whole block with that mess."

Plastic against metal startles Will, but with Hannibal gentling him, he's incapable of moving. He’s incapable of anything aside from staring in blank resignation at the wood patterns on the floor, sporadically twitching and whimpering out atop Hannibal in pleasure.

Matthew breaks out into another round of laughter. “Doctor, you have the patience of a saint. If I were in your place right now, and fuck do I wish I were, my dick would be up that slick cunt so fast— Graham, you’d already be heavy with my pup.”

Will whines against his will, Hannibal’s fingers playing him like a puppet. "You should have killed me."

It would have been a far kinder fate, he thinks.

Eight

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It’s easy to tune out Matthew, lulled by the rise and fall of Hannibal’s chest, and his firm gentling grip. He’s too exhausted, too drained to participate in any more petty rounds of mental see-saw. It’s all meaningless. Hannibal delights in cutting him down, and he’ll eventually grow bored with him, discard him like a used toy. Sooner rather than later, Will hopes, because the thought of being heavy with anyone’s pup, much less the Chesapeake Ripper’s is nauseating. He wishes he had tuned *that* bit out. But it's stuck now, buzzing around in his head like an annoying fly.

You’ve considered it. Will dismisses the thought, and blinks the moisture from his eyes, or tries to. He can’t do this right now. He doesn’t have the energy to listen to his wicked mind trot out excuses for the fully intact rows of birth control stuffed away at the bottom of his dresser next to his gun and badge. It’s hell enough not knowing when to expect Hannibal’s smooth pitch reverberating in his head as though he were driving his way into the space between his thoughts and whispering in his ear.

Of course, he’s fucking considered it. It’s not the first, and won’t be the last time it’s crossed his mind. Because it’s not just expected, it's demanded. Beaten and carved under the loud crack of his father's belt against welted skin. Until Will's safe and isolated harbor had taken the shape of the dust-coated underside of the master bed; the place where his mother’s scent still gently lingered. It’s where he first learned to count the steps. Thirteen, always thirteen from the kitchen to the front door, counting minutes till the door slammed shut and the wheels of the truck peeled out the driveway. Gravel and dust kicking up at the same time the weight of fear lifted from his shoulders.

Heavy-handed knocking. An endless stream of smug, older Alphas hoping to “fix him”, make him their second or third just for daring to be born a male Omega in their backwater town. On one hand, he’s a worthless whore. And on the other, it’s his life’s duty to fulfill his biological purpose by bearing pups at the earliest convenience and practice how to be a good house Omega like his mother was. Otherwise, what Alpha will want him?

Fix him; tear him down and tape him back up and wonder why he won’t stay together.

“I just remembered something.” Will shakes with soundless laughter. Why is he remembering that now? He presses his forehead against Hannibal’s, noses along his cheek, pausing at his jawline where he plants a spite-filled kiss. “Guess you were right. It's all coming back.”

"Your memory." Hannibal's attention sharpens on him. "What was it?"

Will shakes, harder this time.

“I just remembered how many knotless idiots with mommy issues there are running around the place. It’s the second strongest predictor of violence in those lacking secondary gender

characteristics. Gotta compensate somehow.” He raises his voice loud enough for the cameras to pick up. Another kiss, this time at Hannibal's cheekbone. “No worries, baby, you're still in first place.” Alphas will always be at the top. Good or bad. Doesn't matter.

"It's a start." Hannibal gives him a wry look. "I should feel honored you hold me in such high regard."

"The best," Will purrs, a self-deprecating smile on his face.

"I'll make you a mommy." Matthew takes this as a cue to make kissy noises at Will. Going on about his "pretty Omega tits" and how much he’d love to suck on them, and, “Doctor, why the hell haven’t you?”

Good question.

“Yeah, Hannibal,” Will prods, canines bared. “Why haven’t you?”

"Look at him. All slick and pretty for Alpha. Just how an Omega should be." Matthew grins, whistling under his breath. "You'd need a good excuse not to take advantage of that."

“Why are you still here?” Will can't help but wonder why Hannibal hasn't killed Matthew. He's certainly killed for less. Matthew is lucky Hannibal has him tethered on such a close leash, otherwise, he'd rip out his fucking throat.

Just like he did with that police officer.

Will's mind freezes, processing.

"No. I didn't, I didn't, I--" His breath hitches, body lurching despite Hannibal's efforts to gentle him in place.

Kill him. Ridicule him. Experience the rush of teeth sinking into flesh.

A fearful whine spills from his lips, and Will claws at the floor, propelling himself toward the bed, desperate for something solid to ground himself to the present. Hannibal growls, a bassy command that rips through his body like a paralyzing bolt, and Will mewls feebly, swallowing the coppery taste of panic.

"Be still," Hannibal warns.

Will goes limp and listens to Hannibal’s heartbeat, listens to the beat thrum, thrum, until his own heart drowns it out and suddenly there’s not enough air.

Most heats come in waves with little room to breathe; steep waves of suffocating pain, and the burning need to fill an unbearable ache. This? This doesn’t feel like a mock-heat to Will anymore. It was naive, so naive of him to think his body wouldn’t try to make up for all those lost years.

“Let go, let go, let go,” Will rambles, pausing to catch his breath. “Oh, god, you don’t, don’t understand. You’ve gotta let go.”

“Relax. I’ve got you.” Hannibal soothes him with a deep rumble, fingers prodding his pressure point in encouragement. Fanning the flames. “It’s for your own good.”

If Will succumbs to his heat, he won’t have to struggle anymore. *Is that really such a bad thing?*

A telltale warmth pools downward, his chest flushing red. Will feels like he’s dissolving. Beads of sweat roll down the side of his temple, and Will gasps, struggling for breath. Gentling isn’t enough to dull the pain in his lower abdomen. It’s good, feels so fucking good, but it’s not enough. He needs more. Needs something to fill the emptiness inside him, and Hannibal, his Alpha, is right *there*.

"You--" Will sucks in a breath and knows he’s lost the fight. "You knew. You said it wasn't serious."

“Not at first. When I smelled you the second time, I knew all you needed was a little push," says Hannibal, hand cupped around the back of Will's neck as he presses down on the gland there, hot and swollen. "You've never been gentled before, have you? I'm surprised you were able to move at all. Such a handful you are."

“More,” Will purrs, eyes rolling back, questions lost to him. He slots a leg between Hannibal's and angles himself down, no other thought in his head but to relieve the throbbing between his legs. His panties bunch at his slit and chafe, but it only makes him hotter when he thinks of Hannibal ripping them off in a rut. *His pretty Omega.* Will groans and hooks his chin over Hannibal’s shoulder. "Do it… again."

"And greedy, too."

Will squeezes Hannibal’s thigh between his legs, cock throbbing along with his hole. Even his first heat wasn’t anywhere near this indescribable, blistering desperation. Hannibal should have fucked him the moment he bonded him.

Hannibal has this effect on him. The truth is, he always has. Will tried to block it out, turn the other way and close his eyes, cover his ears and make it all go away. The same sacrilegious mantra resonating in perfect rhythm with his heartbeat: *my Alpha, mine, mine, mine.* Will consciously altered his schedule just to get closer, but not too close; shower, eat, and sleep at the same time, and with that done, he’d stare up at the ceiling, the unbearable loneliness gnawing away at him.

"It's a shame that you would choose to hide such an exquisite scent from the world. Or perhaps it's a good thing. You knew better." Hannibal inhales, savoring the sweet note of urgency that pervades the room, and every individual hair on Will’s body rises with it. "If you hadn't, you'd have come to me already marked."

Good, good. Good Omega.

“Hannibal,” Will begs in a hoarse whisper. "I was good… I wanted to be good for you." He drags his tongue up to Hannibal’s chin in a wet, revering stripe, and threads his trembling fingers in his hair. “I want you to fuck me. Need you inside me. You smell it, don’t you?”

Will sucks in a ragged breath, and hovers inches from his lips, slowly rolling his hips down. “I’ve been a good Omega. I've been saving myself for you.”

Will’s fantasized about it so many times he’s lost track. Slick and spread out on his bed with his hand stuffed down his underwear, swiping through article after article of exclusive interviews on Tattlecrime in his tiny little house. The one place where he felt safe; safe from all the awful responsibilities of work, from tip-toeing all the narrow, self-erected borders of his mind, and free from judging eyes. Blanketed in darkness with only the pale glow of his phone screen in a space where he was free to just exist. No matter how wrong it was. How wrong it was to fuck himself to mind-blowing orgasm after orgasm with only the help of that shitty font; how wrong, that when he was loose and spent, he’d give himself a slow, experimental stretch with his fingers, imagining instead that it was Hannibal’s knot spreading him wide. But Will never had any real intention on acting upon it. The same fucked up fantasy running through his head on a loop: *Hannibal, Hannibal, I’m gonna make Hannibal my Alpha. I put him in, it’s only right I break him out. Stop my birth control, stop my suppressants, and let him fuck me, breed me, fucking come inside of me until I’m pregnant with his child. I’ll petition it, they’ll have no choice but to let him go. Hannibal would be a good provider, no, a great provider for our children—the ultimate provider. Top of the food chain. He’s the perfect Alpha, mine, mine, nobody else’s.*

And here he is. No more shitty articles, no more intangible strings of text on a too-bright screen, here is Hannibal in the flesh.

"You've been so good for me, darling. So patient," Hannibal purrs, fondly stroking the base of his spine. Will mewls in contentment. The praise from his Alpha makes him sink deeper.

"Mmn... mhm."

Will gazes devoutly at the jagged indentations of his teeth marks in the solid line of Hannibal’s neck leading up to his jawline. Will’s mark; the mark he put there. Right at the dead center of his neck for everyone to see. If another Omega so much as looked in Hannibal’s direction, Will would tear out their throats with his own claws and feed them to him. *My Alpha, mine.* Will can’t help it, can’t stop himself from parting his lips and tenderly latching onto Hannibal’s mark, intently tracing the outline with his tongue, worshiping it. Needy Omegan whimpers dislodging from his throat alongside his harsh pants of breath.

"Fuck me, please, Alpha." Will takes his bottom lip into his mouth, digs his teeth into it, and waits with bated breath for his Alpha’s next move.

"No," Hannibal responds, stabbing him like a blunt knife.

"Wha…?" Will blinks, the sting of dismissal punching another whine from him. Hannibal is the one who bonded him; he knew this would happen, wanted it to. After everything… "But--
"

Something in him bursts, anger spewing forth. No? *No?* Hannibal doesn't get to say no. Will sure as fuck didn't.

Will rears back and spits in Hannibal's face. "What kind of Alpha are you?! Clearly, you have no problems getting it up, so what? Help me understand, Hannibal. Is it performance anxiety or, no, don't tell me. You're one of those small knot Alphas."

Matthew barks out a laugh, and Will turns to him with venom in his voice. "How's your nose?"

Matthew falters. "My… what?"

"Your nose," Will snaps his teeth and growls. He throws his head back with a jerk to imitate the satisfying motion of his head colliding with it, and Hannibal's hand dislodges from his collar. "Don't remember? Come here and I'll show you. What are you waiting for? Come here and suck my tits. I fucking dare you, you son of a bitch."

"Cute," Matthew snorts. "Looks like someone has pre-heat syndrome."

"If I'm so goddamn cute why are you the one standing on the other side of that glass."

"You're being unnecessary, Will," Hannibal chastises.

"Oh, okay. So he can get away with talking like that, but when I do, it's suddenly unnecessary? Eat me. Just do me a favor and fucking eat me." Will sways his hips, slips the tip of his tongue out, and drags it across his fangs. "Both of you are goddamn cowards. All bark and no action."

Hannibal wipes the spit from his face and smashes the hell of his palm into Will's face, smearing it around like Will's his personal napkin. Will makes a sound of disgust, flinches at the feel of his own spit cooling on his cheek, and stews in it. He can't blame their fucked up bond for warping his vision—it's his fault for imprinting on Hannibal.

Everyone was right about him. Even though he hid it well; they knew. Understood on a molecular level that there was something wrong with Will Graham.

The room tilts on its side.

He's been infatuated with Hannibal for a long, long time.

Admitting it is like glass shattering under intense pressure, razor-sharp shards splintering inside him. Will gets to his knees and lets loose an ear-splitting howl of distress.

Hannibal winces, immediately moving to hold him down and gentle him. "Will, please. Calm down."

"Get your fucking hands off me!" A broken, stuttering purr fills the room, and Will harnesses his voice. "No. You don't get to do that. You don't get to tell me to fucking calm down. You don't know what I've been through. Not a damned clue. It's all your fault. Everything is your fault. I offered myself to you—*to you*—and you know what? You just fucking blew it. Don't touch me, don't look at me, and don't come near me ever again, asshole."

*

Matthew shakes his head as if knocking something loose. “Fuck. That’s the worst sound. You should hear the bitches upstairs howling all day and night. I’m starting to think they do it for fun. I had to start carrying earplugs.” He paces in front of the glass in irritation. “Tough luck, Doctor. He’s right, though. Should have fucked him ages ago.” A pause. Matthew looks up at the ceiling carefully. “I did what you asked.”

“Do you not have places to be?” Hannibal steps up to the glass and clamps his hands behind his back. “Or did you just come here to gawk? Skimp out on responsibilities and chatter the evening away with Dr. Chilton’s prized breeds.”

“If it’s the cameras you’re worried about—” Matthew shrugs, leveling his gaze at Hannibal in a challenge. “He’s not the most tech-savvy individual.”

“Then I’d ask that you learn to exercise patience,” says Hannibal, gesturing at Will writhing and yowling in their bed. “Does he look like he’s in any condition to speak?”

Matthew slams his fist on the glass and growls, sight locked onto Will. “I don’t appreciate being lied to, Doctor.” He takes a deep, groaning breath before throwing his shoulder into the glass, wild-eyed. “Fuck. I’ll fuck you, sweetheart. I’ll take real good care of you. I know what you need—a good, fat knot to fill that tight little aching hole of yours.”

Hannibal steps to the side, cutting off his line of sight. “You should leave.”

“No... no. Not until I talk to him… just wanna talk that’s all…” Matthew swallows, gritting his teeth.

“Now is not the time for rational discussion. It would be in your best interest to step away, for the meantime—take a moment to clear your head. Our dear Will won’t be going anywhere for a very long time,” says Hannibal.

Matthew tightens his fist and gives the glass one last punch before taking a deep breath. “Not all of us have the same otherworldly self-control as you. You smell that, right? If I had known before that he was pure, I never would have settled for sloppy seconds.”

Hannibal disperses a bitter flood of pheromones into the air. A warning from one predator to the other. “I don’t recall that being a part of the discussion.”

“No. But you knew exactly what I wanted when you strung me along to do your bidding. And I carried it out just like you said. Everything was perfect.” Matthew bares his fangs with pride. “You know how satisfying it is watching the dominoes fall into place with just the tip of your finger.“

“And here he is,” says Hannibal. “Your Will Graham. But there's also a time and a place.”

Matthew growls, dark and appreciatively. “Will Graham is the perfect mate. Pretty, intelligent, and just begging to be tamed. The whole package. He has a gift, the ability to understand—to see us, the real us, in ways that no common bitch ever could. If I were you, I’d make every minute count. Cherish them while you can, Doctor.”

The two-way receiver from Matthew's belt crackles.

Matthew switches it off and sighs. "Dr. Chilton. My guess is, he's having technical difficulties." He pulls a small bottle from his pocket, tilts his head back, and sniffs it, wrinkling his nose in disgust. "Gotta run, Doctor. We'll talk more about this later."

*

Will originally makes a dive for his safe zone, his barren, makeshift retreat beneath the mattress, but instinct kicks in at the last moment. The place where his mate's scent is most concentrated is the preferred choice for a heat-sick Omega to build a budding nest. Anything to assuage the emptiness battering at his ribs. Will regrets using his voice and ordering Hannibal away, regrets it with every heat-prickling fiber of his being. He yearns for Hannibal's touch, for his closeness, yet the flippant rejection of his shameful desires laid bare was the final straw. In his boiling, irrational mind, if he's to suffer this cruelty, then Hannibal should, too. The same hollow rejection: the loss of his mate. They both deserve it, both deserve each other. Let the punishment fit the crime, isn't that Hannibal's cold-hearted belief? At least if he dies from heat sickness, Hannibal won't get away unscathed. No Alpha, psychopath or not, is equipped to withstand a broken bond.

He'll regret ever bonding me. I'll make sure he does.

He tries to eat the food. There's a huge difference in portions. The plate labeled with an A has greater portions of meat. O is mostly carbs, with little protein and portions better fit for pups. While Hannibal is occupied with Matthew, Will snatches up the both of them and carries them to the bed. Hannibal can fucking starve for all he cares. Half-way through Hannibal's plate, Will launches himself over the edge of the bed and vomits up a thick black substance. He runs trembling fingers atop his head, clutches at his hair, afraid of what appendages he'll find there, and rocks to soothe himself. When he blinks again, his stomach contents are back to a normal, gross, foamy mess. Will runs the back of his hand across his mouth and lets the stray tears slide down his cheeks.

Exhausted, Will curls up on his side and busies himself by grinding his palm against his straining dick. His shallow breaths and heartbeat hammering loudly make it difficult to hear, much less collect his own thoughts. It pisses him off a bit, the two of them talking as if he isn't present, but the words keep flying over his heat-muddled head. If only he could focus for just a second.

There's another tremendous thud, the sound of Matthew as he batters himself against the glass at the same time the strained gears in Will's head click into place, and then silence.

Both men appeared visibly agitated by his distress call. Hannibal isn't immune to his voice.

Matthew, with the too sharp teeth, and the boldness to stare in the face of evil without turning tail.

Will straightens, the arousal permeating his mind parting like fog under the illuminating beam of headlights as he bristles at the revelation. For all his gifts, he curses himself for not realizing it sooner. Will discreetly scents the air and hugs Hannibal's pillow closer against his

chest. There's no detectable trace of an Alpha besides Hannibal, and while Hannibal has a remarkably overpowering scent—one that elicits the urge in any Omega to roll over and show their belly—Will's nose would still work to distinguish any potential threats to his territory. He supposes there could be the possibility of Matthew using scent blockers; Alpha branded blockers are rare, but not for any legal basis or out of the lack of supply. Call it a matter of pride. It's not like they have anything to fucking hide, they're not the ones at risk of being forced and taken on the street. Or put in a cage.

The release of pheromones from Hannibal further proves it. It's meant to ward off rival Alphas, but to Will, it's intoxicating, like Omegan catnip. Will greedily draws it in onto his tongue and chirps, rolling around on his back, mingling his sweet scent with Hannibal's. It's an act—partially. The more they underestimate his capacity for thought, the better. They're more likely to loosen their lips and spill information. Feed him the necessary ammo to wound.

Bleary-eyed, Will rubs his flushed cheeks on Hannibal's pillow.

"Oh." Matthew stops. "Before I forget, Dr. Chilton wanted me to drop off Graham's welcome package. Should come with everything—feminine hygiene and whatnot. Anything else he wants, as long as it's within reason, you'll have to fill out a form for him. You already know the deal." Matthew pulls back the handle to the drop off slot and deposits a pink toiletry bag before letting it fall shut with a rattle. He throws one last glance over his shoulder and Will, twirls his keys, and winks. "If Lecter won't fuck you, give me a buzz, sweetheart."

Will understands what Matthew's purpose is now. He understands that there is more than just one actor.

Will smirks and blows Matthew a kiss, a velvety purr rumbling in his chest. "I'll keep it in mind."

Hannibal, with his back turned, snarls in silence.

Chapter End Notes

Happy Valentines <3

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